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THE BAPTISTS

WHO ARE THEY?

AND

WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE?

BY
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PHILADELPHIA
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY
1701-1703 Chestnut Street

1898

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F. S. Stakney
Oct. 18. 1932

INTRODUCTION

THE present publication has originated in the thought that it is perfectly legitimate and proper for any church or body of Christians to make a public statement, from time to time, of what its members believe, and why they believe it. Such a course may be productive of much good, in enabling us better to understand each other's position. It may save us from false and uncharitable views, and from unintentionally misrepresenting one another.

Another reason which has led to its preparation is the fact that much ignorance concerning our doctrines and principles is frequently manifested. We are sometimes misrepresented, and doctrines are attributed to us which no true and enlightened Baptist ever held. Although our principles are plain and simple, many do not know what we believe.

The following, then, aims to be a brief and simple statement, by one who became a Baptist from principle (having been reared in the Church of England), of the doctrines and principles which Baptists hold most sacredly, as the revealed will of God. It is not designedly controversial. Yet it would be impossible to discuss denominational peculiarities without more or less reference to controverted points. It attacks no one, it upbraids no one, it ridicules no one. At the same time, I must claim the privilege of being free and unfettered in discussing principles and doctrines, and in appealing to history for its verdict, for truth is the object to be gained. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

I address myself especially to thoughtful persons who are willing to give a fair, unprejudiced hearing, who can give due weight to evidence, and see the force of an argument.

It will be observed that I have devoted considerable space to quotations from the writings of eminent men. I have done

this because of its manifest importance. The almost unanimous concurrence of the ablest biblical scholars who have ever lived, concerning certain principles, ought certainly to have greater weight than any private opinion or statement. In making such extracts no unfair advantage has been taken of any man's words, *i. e.*, no author has been made to say what he does not say. The plain, deliberate, published statements of men of learning and reputation are given, without distorting or wresting them.

My object, then, as before stated, is to set forth, as I may be able within the present narrow limits, the leading principles of the Baptists, and ascertain whether they are founded on the word of God and the principles of the Redeemer's kingdom. If they will not bear that test they are not worth holding for an hour. If they are the principles which Christ laid down as the fundamentals of his everlasting kingdom, then they are worth more than all human knowledge; yea, they are worth dying for.

NOTE TO FOURTH EDITION

THIS little manual is still called for ; hence the issue of this fourth edition. Several cases have come to my knowledge in which it has been a guide and help to those seeking the truth. May it be so to others !

Believing firmly that the principles which it represents are in accordance with the word of God, and therefore true ; and if scriptural and true, therefore needful, it is again sent forth. May the Head of the church accept it, and if he please, employ it in his service !

W. B. B.

RAMAPATAM, October, 1898.

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THE BAPTISTS

WHO ARE THEY? AND WHAT DO THEY
BELIEVE?

I

Our Name

The name "Baptist" has been applied to us to distinguish us from others, and it serves as a convenient designation. In former times it was "Anabaptists," meaning rebaptizers, because then, as now, all who were received into our churches on profession of their faith in Christ were, according to his command, baptized, whether the ceremony of infant sprinkling had been performed or not. This term always was, and still is, repudiated by us as unjust; for, according to our views of divine truth, we contend that it is not a rebaptism, such persons never having been truly, that is, scripturally,

baptized. The term Anabaptist is rarely used now.

The name "Baptists," as used by us, does not imply that we are followers of John the Baptist. It has no direct reference to him nor to any other human leader. Nor does it mean that we make baptism the central truth in our religious system. How far we are from doing this will be shown presently.

The term is not the most expressive one that could be used to designate us; for merely to hold the views which we do concerning baptism is but a part of what is implied in being a Baptist. Not every one who believes in or practises adult immersion is a real Baptist. There are great underlying principles touching personal faith in Christ, loyalty to his word, individual responsibility to him, and the spiritual nature of his kingdom, which we regard as the weightier matters.

We have no real name but Christians. But since Christendom is divided into different bodies, there must be some way of distinguishing them one from another, and as others are designated Catholics,

Anglicans, Independents, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., and people choose to call us Baptists in order to have some definite distinction, we do not object to it. So much for the name—that is all it is and all it means.

II

The Infallible Standard

The great fundamental principle of the Baptists is this: That the word of God is the only, all-sufficient, and infallible standard and authority in religious things. They demand a “thus saith the Lord” for every doctrine and rule and practice for which authority is claimed in the churches of Christ. They insist upon unswerving fidelity to the Holy Scriptures, without adding thereto or taking therefrom. “To the law and to the testimony,” is their motto. In place of Canon Laws and Rubrics, and Ecclesiastical Institutes, and Books of Discipline, and Directories “by authority,”

they regard the Bible as the only authoritative statute book in the things of religion.

Surely this principle is the only safe one. For the slightest departure from it, or the adoption of any other, opens the way for the modification of Christ's laws, or even their abolition, and the substitution of human laws, resulting in unlimited changes of faith and practice.

This principle commends itself as one of prime importance, and requiring the strictest adherence. For if the Bible is not all-sufficient, and additional regulations have to be made, who shall make them? Wise men differ widely. The learned of one age might repudiate the principles adopted by those of a former age. One council might ignore the decrees of another; and thus endless confusion must ensue. Let the dissensions and distractions of Christendom be the forcible, yet sad illustration. Besides all this, God has said, "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." The Lord alone is the rightful lawgiver of his church. His people are not at lib-

erty to make laws ; their duty is simply to execute and obey those already made by the great Legislator. What he has laid down they are to observe ; what he has not enacted they may not demand.

It is thus that Baptists hold the headship of Christ. They really and practically hold him as the "Head over all things to the church," "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence."

They believe that no command of Christ is non-essential. There is much talk about essentials and non-essentials. But how can any command, or even the slightest intimation of the will of the all-glorious King of kings and Lord of lords, the Redeemer and Head of the church, be unimportant? Every word of his is pregnant with meaning and weighty with authority.

This principle has not always been firmly held. If it had been unswervingly adhered to from the beginning, Christianity would doubtless have been saved very largely from corruption and division, and a complete return to it now would tend greatly to the unity of all believers.

III

Personal Faith Indispensable

Another foundation principle of the Baptists, and one in which they differ from all the leading sects of Christians, is this: That personal faith in Christ is the great fundamental requirement and prerequisite to all church ordinances. They hold that none but those who have believed in Jesus to the saving of the soul are qualified for either of the sacraments of Christ, or for membership in his church. We are thus led to the conclusion that ordinances are unmeaning and useless forms without faith in Christ on the part of the candidate himself. Rivers of water cannot wash away his sin; the sacred Supper cannot originate the first impulse of spiritual life.

Faith must be placed at the very threshold of religion. Previous to repentance and faith, man is an enemy against God. How then can the exercises of religion on the part of such a one be acceptable to him? Faith is in-

dispensable; nothing can be substituted for it; nothing can be given as an equivalent; its absence must render void all ceremonies. And it must be personal faith. Proxy is inadmissible. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

From this principle results our positive and oft-repeated denial that we believe baptism to be a saving ordinance. There are none who are so determinedly opposed to this deadly error as Baptists. And yet there are persons, intelligent and well informed in other things, who say, either through ignorance or malice, "Oh, the Baptists believe that you cannot be saved unless you are dipped!" And this statement sometimes comes from the pulpit. There never was a charge made more utterly and absolutely false. They no more believe that than they believe one cannot be saved without the Lord's Supper.

It is not the Baptists who, when one is taken suddenly ill, hurry away for a minister to come and baptize him. Baptism with us is a profession of faith already

possessed, and we refuse to baptize any but those who declare their faith in Christ, and their belief that they have been born again, and their solemn determination to follow and serve him. We baptize not because it is saving, but because it is commanded.

Whether others regard it as really a saving ordinance, or as having some mysterious sort of saving influence, or at least as being a channel of grace, let their own statements declare.

The late Rev. Henry Melvill, of London, a representative Episcopalian, with the Prayer-book open in his hand, says: "We really think that no fair, no straightforward dealing, can get rid of the conclusion that the church holds what is called Baptismal Regeneration. You may dislike the doctrine, you may wish to have it expunged from the Prayer-book, but so long as I subscribe to that Prayer-book, and so long as I officiate according to the forms of that Prayer-book, I do not see how I can be commonly honest and deny that every baptized person is on that account regen-

erate."—*Melville's Sermons*, Vol. II., p. 306.

The "Augsburg Confession of Faith," the Lutheran standard of doctrine, distinctly declares baptism to be necessary to salvation, and that through it infants become children of God (Art. 9).

The "Westminster Confession of Faith" declares baptism to be unto the party baptized "a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins," etc. And yet it is applied, by those who hold this creed, to persons who do not and cannot believe, so that it signifies in such cases, "ingrafting into Christ, regeneration, and remission of sins," without personal faith.

In Wesley's "Doctrinal Tracts," pp. 246-259, he says: "By baptism we who were 'by nature children of wrath,' are made the children of God," and much more to the same effect.

Baptists unequivocally deny, both in their declarations of faith and by their practice, that they believe baptism to be a saving ordinance.

This principle, viz., the absolute necessity of personal faith before all ordinances and church engagements and relationships, is of the greatest moment, and cannot be insisted on too earnestly. On it the spirituality of the church and the welfare of souls, in one sense, depend. That it is, to a lamentable extent, overlooked or made void by various bodies of Christians, is only too evident. Some who profess to hold it, practically ignore it. Wherever infant baptism is practised, this principle is violated.

IV

A Regenerated Church-membership

Another Baptist principle, closely allied to the preceding one, is as follows: A church of Christ, according to his word, should be composed only of regenerated persons; not those who are merely moral and respectable; not those who are but seekers after salvation; not those who can repeat certain creeds and catechisms;

not regenerated persons and their offspring, but those alone who make a credible profession of conversion.

All the references to Christian churches throughout the New Testament imply that they were companies of believers, persons who had become "new creatures" in Christ Jesus. The apostolic Epistles begin with such salutations as these: "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints"; "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints," etc.; "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus"; "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons"; "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at Colosse."

Now, when vital union with Christ and a consequent renewal of heart and life are not made the prime and indispensable qualifications for membership in a church, the scriptural standard is lowered, and the principle here laid down is abandoned. This principle is ignored

wherever persons are received into church-membership because they have arrived at a certain age, or because they have received a certain amount of religious instruction, or because their parents are religious, or because they are highly respectable and possess means and influence, and can therefore contribute largely to the support of the church. A scriptural church, under such conditions, is a dream.

A regenerated church-membership and infant baptism are irreconcilable. They are directly opposed to and subversive of each other. Because, by infant baptism, persons are brought into the church, unconsciously and involuntarily, who may never be born again. But they are members of the church. This has been maintained over and over again by leading Pedobaptists. Large numbers, therefore, are brought into the church in this way who may never possess any vital godliness; and whose conversion is rendered less probable by the fact that something was done for them in their infancy, which they are in danger of regarding as in

some sense a spiritual benefit, if not an actual substitute for the new birth. In fact, in some denominations they are taught that it is the new birth. Why should one think conversion necessary, when he is taught from his childhood, as the writer was, that in baptism he was made "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven"? How unmeaning to preach to "a member of Christ" the necessity of being born again! He might well reply "I am an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; the church made me such; go and preach repentance and regeneration to those who need it." How can a regenerated church-membership be even approximately realized under such circumstances?

It is not claimed that the membership of all Baptist churches is entirely pure. They doubtless include some who have never known Christ by faith. But, while this is to be deplored, it cannot be wondered at when we remember that even under the eyes of the apostles, false professors, such as Simon Magus, crept into

the church. But there is a vast difference between unknowingly receiving some who, although solemnly professing faith in Christ and a change of heart are nevertheless unrenewed, there is, I say, a great difference between this and knowingly, deliberately, and purposely introducing large numbers in their natural, unrenewed state, into the church. If unconverted persons come into the fellowship of our churches, it is not the fault of our principles. We receive those only who make what we believe to be a sincere and honest profession of saving faith in Jesus Christ.

V

Church Polity

Baptists hold that a Christian church is, according to the New Testament, a company of true believers in Christ, who, having been baptized, mutually band themselves together to observe the ordinances of Christ, to walk in the fellowship of the gospel, to maintain a godly

life, to uphold the worship of God, to glorify his name, and to seek the extension of his kingdom throughout the world.

In the matter of church government, Baptists believe that each separate and individual church is independent of the authority of all other churches, persons, and bodies of men, either civil or ecclesiastical, and that its affairs are to be administered by its own members, under the authority of Christ. This is generally known as the congregational form of church polity.

The use of the word church in the New Testament is instructive on this point. We find it frequently used in the plural, the "churches." When it is employed in the singular, it generally refers to a particular company of believers, in a certain place, *e. g.*, "The church that was at Antioch"; "the church of Ephesus"; "the church in Smyrna," etc. In the other cases where it occurs in the singular, it plainly refers to the whole number of Christ's people, considered collectively, but evidently never means a large eccle-

siastical organization, embracing a number of churches, such as those of a whole country or province. We find no expression in Scripture corresponding to such terms as the "Church of England," or the "Church of Scotland," or "the — Church of the United States." We do not here read of the Church of Judea, or the Church of Galatia, or the Church of Macedonia, but the churches of Judea, etc. "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria," etc. (Acts 9 : 31); "And so were the churches established in the faith" (Acts 16 : 5). Paul speaks of "all the churches of the Gentiles" (Rom. 16 : 4), and "the churches of God" (1 Cor. 11 : 16). Again he says, "And so ordain I in all the churches" (1 Cor. 7 : 17), not in the whole church; and "that which cometh upon me daily, the care," not of the whole church, but "of all the churches" (2 Cor. 11 : 28).

We find in the New Testament nothing of the nature of ecclesiastical courts, as they are called, exercising jurisdiction and authority over churches. Our Lord

Jesus Christ in his directions for the treatment of offenses (Matt. 18) recognizes the church (evidently the individual church to which the offender belongs) as the ultimate tribunal of appeal, and its action as final. He says, when the previous steps have failed, "tell it unto the church." He makes not the remotest reference to any higher court of appeal, either ecclesiastical or civil.

We find another illustration of this principle in 1 Cor. 5 : 2, 5, 12, 13. Paul reproves the church at Corinth for not dealing promptly with an offender, and calls upon them, when they are assembled together, to deliver him to Satan, etc. Again, in referring to this case (2 Cor. 2 : 6), he states that the punishment was inflicted by "many," or literally by the greater number, which manifestly means the majority.

It has been claimed that the fifteenth chapter of the Acts furnishes authority for church courts. Is this a valid claim? Let us turn to the account of it.

A church sprang up in the Gentile city of Antioch. Certain men from Judea

visited them, and taught that they must be circumcised, or they could not be saved. This doctrine was a subversion of the gospel. After much discussion it was decided to carry the question to Jerusalem, where most of the apostles were, and where they would be most likely to ascertain the truth in reference to the disputed doctrine. Paul, Barnabas, and others were sent as delegates.

When they were come to Jerusalem they were received by the church, and the apostles and elders. Then a meeting was held to consider the matter. At the close of Peter's address, "all the multitude kept silence" while they heard what Paul and Barnabas had to say. Then James spoke, and after his address, "it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas," to bear their communication; and the document which they prepared commences thus: "The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting," etc. We are led to the following conclusions:

1. This was not a general council, for only two churches were represented, and therefore, it bears no resemblance to modern councils.

2. It was unlike any council which can now be convened, for it was presided over by apostles and inspired men.

3. It furnishes no warrant for authoritative councils, since they cannot now issue inspired decrees.

4. It was in all respects, and in the highest degree, exceptional and extraordinary.

The celebrated Archbishop Whately says: "As for so-called general councils, we find not even any mention of them, or allusion to any such expedient. The pretended First-Council at Jerusalem does seem to me a most extraordinary chimera, without any warrant whatever from sacred history."—*Kingdom of Christ*, p. 36.

Mosheim, the great church historian, says: "In those primitive times, each Christian church was composed of the people, the presiding officers, and the assistants or deacons. These must be

The New Testament bishop was not a "lord over God's heritage," in authority over a number of churches and ministers in a large district, but was simply the pastor, or one of the pastors, of a church. Paul, in writing to the church at Philippi, addresses "the saints in Christ Jesus, with the bishops and deacons."

The terms "bishop" and "elder" are used synonymously. In Paul's address at Miletus, to the elders of the Ephesian Church (Acts 20), he says: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (*episcopous*). The same word is here used which is elsewhere translated bishop. The elders, therefore, were bishops. The same thing is proved conclusively in Titus 1:5-7, where Paul reminds Titus that he left him in Crete to ordain elders in every city. He goes on immediately to mention the necessary qualifications of the men to be so ordained, and then adds, "for a bishop" must be blameless, etc. "Elder," "bishop," "pastor," therefore refer to the same office.

That these two officers, bishop and deacon, were the only ones recognized in the primitive churches seems evident from Paul's directions both to Timothy and Titus. In treating of the qualifications of church officers, he mentions these only. If others had existed he would undoubtedly have referred to them. We find no warrant in the Book for the almost endless variety and gradation of clerical orders and distinctions, from pope to parson, from cardinal to curate, which exist at the present day. We must, therefore, conclude that these offices are the inventions of men, and we are of the opinion that the Lord Jesus Christ does not need men to invent anything for him. "His work is perfect."

Baptist churches are presided over by "bishops," in the New Testament sense—*i. e.*, overseers or pastors—and their temporal affairs are in charge of deacons.

Baptists call councils from time to time, as occasion seems to require, but no authority is claimed for them. They do not issue "decrees," but are only advisory. They are not clerical conclaves, but are

composed of private brethren as well as ministers. Baptists hold Associations and Conventions, but they are merely meetings for general religious purposes, and have no legislative authority or ruling power whatever.

And yet, there is as much real unity among Baptist churches the world over, as among those which are bound together by extensive, complicated, ponderous ecclesiastical systems of human origin. Baptist churches, though independent of each other, are united by the most powerful of all bonds, even those specified by Paul, when exhorting the Ephesian Christians to maintain unity (Eph. 4 : 4-6): "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

This system of church government, framed, we believe, by Divine wisdom, is characterized by simplicity, instead of complexity; and yet it is comprehensive enough to meet all requirements, and adequate to the successful settlement of all

difficulties, when administered in the spirit of Christian love.

It is in connection with this principle of the independence of the churches, that Baptists have ever maintained an uncompromising disapproval of the unhallowed union of Church and State; it being perfectly clear that thus united, the Church must be secularized by the State, as is lamentably apparent in all such establishments.

VI

Soul Liberty

Another principle for which Baptists have always contended is soul liberty, or perfect freedom of conscience.

Most denominations are very ready to advocate this principle now, since in the light of the nineteenth century it is seen to be built on the foundation of truth and justice; but trace back its history and it will be found to be a distinguishing principle of the Baptists. They have ever stood forth as the champions of per-

fect religious liberty—holding that no man or body of men, civil or ecclesiastical, has a right to interfere with the conscience or to force any one to believe this or that doctrine or to worship God according to this or that form.

The celebrated John Locke, in his "Essay on Toleration," says: "The Baptists were, from the first, the friends of liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty."

Bancroft, the American historian, says: "Freedom of conscience, unlimited freedom of mind was, from the first, the trophy of the Baptists."—*History United States*, Vol. II., pp. 66, 67.

The first modern treatise ever written upon religious liberty was by Leonard Busher, a Baptist, in 1614. Its title is "Religious Peace, or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience." It asks full liberty for men to worship God in the manner they believe to be right. Three years before that the "Baptist Confession of Faith," then published, used this language: "We believe that the magistrate is not to meddle with religion or matters of

conscience, nor compel men to this or that form of religion, because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the church and the conscience.”

The honor of being the first advocate of religious liberty has been claimed for Jeremy Taylor. This claim is not supported; for, in the first place, his plea is only for toleration of a few Christian sects, which falls far short of religious freedom; and, moreover, his treatise was issued nearly forty years after that of Leonard Busher.

This principle is so manifestly reasonable and right and in accordance with truth and equity that it would be superfluous to enter into an argumentative defense of it. How surprising that the opposite principle of intolerance and persecution—a principle so unreasonable, unjust, unscriptural, and thoroughly bad—should have survived so long!

The name of Roger Williams being inseparably connected with the cause of religious liberty, we cannot pass it over in silence. It is a name on which rests imperishable honor. He was the first

advocate of soul liberty in America. For this cause he was banished from the colony of Massachusetts, in 1635, by the very men who had fled from their own land to find religious freedom. There is no exhibition of moral heroism in the history of the American continent grander than that which is presented by Roger Williams going into exile among savage Indians and enduring all the hardships of banishment in mid-winter on account of principle; and under such circumstances founding a commonwealth the law of which should be perfect toleration—a commonwealth where, in the language of Judge Storey, “we read, for the first time since Christianity ascended the throne of the Cæsars, the declaration ‘that conscience should be free, and men should not be punished for worshiping God in the way they were persuaded he required.’” — *Roger Williams and the Baptists*, by Dr. Eddy.

Baptists, though often suffering persecution from both Papists and Protestants, have never persecuted, have never exercised intolerance toward others. It has

been said that the reason of this is that they never had the power. This assertion is false, as might be shown by several references. Take one instance :

The colony of Rhode Island was founded under Baptist auspices. Had Williams and his people chosen to establish the Baptist faith as the religion of the land they might have done so. Had they desired to secure to themselves peculiar religious privileges and monopolies, and to oppress those who dissented from them they might have done so. On the contrary, perfect religious freedom for all was secured by their laws from the first.

But the principles of Baptists render it impossible that they should persecute. Their views of the individuality of religion and the spirituality of Christ's kingdom forbid that they should coerce men in matters of faith. If they did so they would cease to be Baptists. They in themselves have been no better than the men of their time. Their clearer views must have been due to their interpretation of Scripture.

VII

Baptism: the Design

As regards baptism, we believe that the main thing is the object or design. What is the principle which underlies the ordinance? This is the first and vital point. If this is not scriptural the most orthodox form of administration is vain.

Evidently the Scriptures teach, in all their references to the subject, that baptism is the conscious, voluntary, deliberate act of a believer in Christ, because he is a believer, and because Christ requires this public acknowledgment from all his true disciples. The Bible does not teach that baptism is something done for a person without his knowledge or forced upon him without his consent. Nor is it something that he observes because it is customary, or as a mere outward form. Nor is it a sacrament for the purpose of obtaining salvation, nor a mechanical process by which Christians are made. But it is the conscious, willing profession of personal faith in the

Lord Jesus Christ and of surrender to him. The believer thus declares, in the way appointed by the Redeemer himself and enjoined on all his followers, that he now trusts in Christ and gratefully accepts him as his all-sufficient Saviour and rightful King, and gladly becomes his disciple and follower. The act expresses the Christian's faith in the two greatest facts of redemption, the death and resurrection of Christ, and also symbolizes his own death to sin and his rising to the new life.

We believe that this is the meaning and design of baptism, according to the word of God. It is either expressly taught or implied in every passage where the ordinance is mentioned. It does not mean any more: as for instance, regeneration, or deliverance from sin, or a passport to heaven. It does not mean any less: as, for instance, joining the church, or receiving a Christian name, or showing respect for religion, or conforming to a custom. It means just what we have said, death on the one side and a new life on the other.

VIII

Baptism: the Subjects

This has been partly anticipated in what has been said in the foregoing section concerning the design of baptism.

Baptists hold that believers only are fit subjects for baptism. This, they believe, is abundantly proved by the positive precepts of the word of God and by the principle of Christ's kingdom. Let us look at the teachings of Scripture. There is not a passage in the Bible where we are told that an infant was baptized; there is not a command in the whole book to baptize infants.

Belief is always the expressly enjoined prerequisite. Take the Commission, as recorded by Matthew (28 : 19, 20): "Go ye, therefore, and teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Notice here first the order of the words: (1) Disciple; (2) Baptize; (3)

Teach. This order must be significant and important. To affirm the contrary is to charge the Saviour with using indefinite and random speech in one of the most notable utterances which ever fell from his lips. We learn, then, that the first thing is to make disciples, then to baptize them, then to instruct them in the command of Christ. If it is asked, how are the servants of Christ to make disciples? we answer, by preaching the glad tidings to sinners. Those who truly believe the good news and heartily accept the proffered salvation become disciples. Notice, secondly, the tense of the participle. It is not *baptisantes*, having baptized, but *baptizantes*, baptizing. Note, in the third place, the gender of the pronoun, *autous*, which refers directly to disciples (understood) and cannot refer to nations. It was disciples they were to baptize.

But it has sometimes been said that the passage means they were to make disciples by baptizing them. This interpretation, besides teaching a most unscriptural doctrine, and being utterly un-

supported, is forbidden by John 4 : 1, where it is said that the Pharisees heard "that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John." The making of the disciples and the baptizing of them are here clearly distinguished.

If we turn to the Commission, as recorded by Mark 16 : 15, 16, the same doctrine of believer's baptism is clearly taught: "Preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Here is the same order: (1) Belief; (2) Baptism.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized" (Acts 2 : 41).

"But when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women" (Acts 8 : 12).

"Then answered Peter, can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts 10 : 46, 47.)

"And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized" (Acts 18 : 8).

The baptism of the households of Lydia and the Philippian jailer is not at all at variance with the doctrine of believer's baptism. For in the case of Lydia we learn that she was "of the city of Thyatira," in Asia Minor, far distant from Philippi, where she was converted; and that she was "a seller of purple," probably a traveling merchant. Is it likely that her household included infants?

Says De Wette: "There is nothing here which shows that any except adults were baptized." Meyer says: "When Jewish or heathen families became Christians, the children in them could have been baptized only in cases in which they were so far developed that they could profess their faith in Christ, and did actually profess it; for this was the universal requisition for the reception of baptism. On the contrary, if the children were still unable to believe they did not partake of the rite, since they were wanting in what the act presupposed." Olshausen says: "Since a profession of faith preceded baptism it is improbable

in the highest degree that, by 'her household,' children of an immature age are to be understood." These three eminent German commentators are Pedobaptists.

In the case of the jailer, we are expressly told that Paul and Silas "spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house"; and afterward we read that he "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

Let us now hear what ecclesiastical historians and other eminent Christian scholars have to say on this subject, especially in reference to the practice of the early church. Since none of us knows, from his own personal knowledge, what have been the belief and practice of Christians in former ages, we must appeal to history and call for the testimony of those who have made these subjects their special study. And that these may be reliable, they must be men whose ability, learning, and opportunities for investigation were of the highest order, whose testimony is irrefragable, and whose works have become standard au-

thorities throughout Christendom. In order that our witnesses may be entirely free from suspicion of partiality we will not summon a single Baptist to the witness stand.

Dr. Augustus Neander, one of the most eminent church historians, a name of world-wide reputation, says: "Baptism was administered at first only to adults, as men were accustomed to conceive baptism and faith as strictly connected. We have all reason for not deriving infant baptism from apostolic institution."—*Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I., p. 311, Am. ed.

Again he says: "As baptism was closely united with a conscious entrance on Christian communion, faith and baptism were always connected with one another, and thus it is in the highest degree probable that baptism was performed only in the instances where both could meet together, and that the practice of infant baptism was unknown at this period."—*Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, pp. 161, 162.

Curcellæus (died 1659), an eminently

learned man, published a critical edition of the Greek Testament. "The baptism of infants in the first two centuries after Christ was altogether unknown, but in the third century was allowed by some few. In the fifth and following ages it was generally received. The custom of baptizing infants did not begin before the third age after Christ was born."—*Inst. Rel. Ch., Lib. I., Chap. XII.*

Professor Jacobi, University of Berlin: "Infant baptism was established neither by Christ nor the apostles. In all places where we find the necessity of baptism notified, either in a dogmatic or historical point of view, it is evident that it was only meant for those who were capable of comprehending the word preached and of being converted to Christ by an act of their own will."—*Kitto's Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature, Vol. I., p. 287.*

Baron Bunsen, Prussian Ambassador at the British Court for many years, a deeply learned man and voluminous writer on ecclesiastical subjects: "Pedo-baptism, in the modern sense, meaning thereby the baptism of new-born infants,

with the vicarious promises of parents and sponsors, was utterly unknown to the early church, not only down to the end of the second, but, indeed, to the middle of the third century."—*Hippolytus*, Vol. III., p. 180.

Prof. Moses Stuart, D. D., Andover Theological Seminary: "Commands or plain and certain examples in the New Testament relative to it (infant baptism) I do not find."—*Biblical Repository*, 1883, p. 365.

Rev. Dr. J. P. Lange, the eminent German commentator: "All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament fail. It is totally opposed to the spirit of the apostolic age and to the fundamental principles of the New Testament."—*Infant Baptism*, p. 101.

The "North British Review" is a publication of the highest standing. The article from which we quote is attributed to Dr. Hanna, of Edinburgh: "Scripture knows nothing of infant baptism. There is absolutely not a single trace of it to be found in the New Testament. There are passages which may be recon-

ciled with it if the practice can only be proved to have existed, but there is not one word which asserts its existence" (*July*, 1852, pp. 209-212).

The eminent Dean Stanley, of Westminster, than whom there is probably no higher authority on questions of Oriental ecclesiastical history, contributed an article on "Baptism" to the "Nineteenth Century Review" in 1879. He first shows what baptism was in the primitive churches, viz., the immersion of a believer, as a voluntary profession of personal faith in Christ. He then proceeds to point out the changes which have since been introduced. The third change noticed is that which refers to the subjects of baptism. Under this head he says: "Another change is not so complete (as that from immersion to sprinkling), but it is perhaps more important. In the apostolic age and in the three centuries which followed, it is evident that, as a general rule, those who came to baptism came in full age, of their own deliberate choice. We find a few cases of the baptism of children; in the third century

we find one case of the baptism of infants. The liturgical service of baptism was framed entirely for full-grown converts, and is only by considerable adaptation applied to the case of infants.”

This testimony might be extended almost indefinitely, plain statements to precisely the same effect having been made by very many of the highest authorities in church history and Scripture interpretation, among whom may be specified Luther, Erasmus, Limborch, Schleiermacher, Gieseler, Lange, Hagenbach, D'Aubigné, Hodge, Stewart, and Woods. This evidence is furnished by men whose denominational position and sentiments would naturally prejudice them against such views and prevent their making such concessions, unless truth absolutely required it. To suppose that their statements are unreliable is to turn all history into fiction. If then this evidence so clear, so concurrent, so abundant, is true and infant baptism was not instituted by Christ or the apostles, the question naturally arises, whence and under what circumstances did it come?

Its origin is plain. Error in doctrine preceded and gave birth to it. No one who carefully reads the apostolic Epistles can fail to notice, by the statements made and the warnings given, that error in doctrine and practice was even then beginning to creep into the churches; and the apostles expressly declared that this should be the case more fully afterward. Now, if we turn to the writings of the "Fathers," as they are called,—that is, those who lived during the first few centuries after Christ,—we find that one of the earliest and most pernicious errors which developed itself was the doctrine that baptism saves the soul, and that salvation is impossible without it. All the evidence needed on this point is a reference to the writings of some of the "Fathers." Cyprian, Ambrose, Chrysostom, and others, speak in the most extravagant terms of the benefits and miraculous effects of baptism. They taught that all who died unbaptized must inevitably be lost. It is easy to see what such a doctrine would lead to. How could parents endure the thought of their

dying children sinking to perdition when it was in their power to save them by having them baptized? Claudius Salmasius, who filled a professorship at the University of Leyden, in 1632, says: "An opinion prevailed that no one could be saved without being baptized, and for that reason the custom arose of baptizing infants." First the design of the ordinance was corrupted and that led to unscriptural practice. Many authorities might be cited to show that this was the true historic origin of infant baptism. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration and that of infant baptism were closely connected then; have they ever been clearly separated, or can they be?

Another clew to the practice of primitive times is found in the adult baptism of several of the distinguished theologians and preachers of those days, although their parents were Christians of unquestioned intelligence and piety.

Gregory Nazianzen, Archbishop of Constantinople, who died A. D. 389, and whose father was bishop of Nazianzen, was not baptized till he was nearly thirty

years old.—*Ullman's Gregory of Nazianzen.*

Ephrem, of Edessa, a learned writer (died A. D. 378), was born of parents who “were ennobled by the blood of martyrs in their family and had themselves both confessed Christ before the persecutors under Diocletian or his successors. They consecrated Ephrem to God from his cradle, like another Samuel, but he was eighteen years old when he was baptized.”—*Alban Butler's Lives of the Saints.*

We learn from ecclesiastical history that Basil of Cæsarea (A. D. 350), though he could boast of Christian ancestry for several generations, was not baptized till he was twenty-seven years old. Chrysostom (died A. D. 407), the golden-mouthed preacher, archbishop of Constantinople, and born of Christian parents, received baptism at the age of twenty-eight. Ambrosius, bishop of Milan, was a citizen of Rome, but born in France A. D. 340. He received a religious education and was reared in the habits of virtuous conduct; but he was not baptized till he had

reached the age of thirty-four. Augustine was not baptized until he was nearly twenty-five years of age, though his mother, Monica, was a woman of great piety and instructed him carefully in the principles of the Christian religion. Jerome was baptized at the age of thirty-one. The Emperor Theodosius was baptized in the thirty-fourth or thirty-fifth year of his age, though he had been trained up from his childhood in the Christian faith. How strange that these persons were not baptized in their infancy! Evidently the erroneous practice had not yet become very general.

It is not to be wondered at that Baptists cannot find authority in the word of God for infant baptism, when its advocates are so divided in opinion in reference to it. Some of its ablest defenders point to the Abrahamic covenant as containing the main strength of the scriptural argument in its favor. Other equally high authorities declare that the Abrahamic covenant furnishes no ground for infant baptism. Some denominations baptize infants in order to bring them

into the church; others baptize them because they are already in. There is a perfect chaos of opinion in regard to it. The reasons alleged for its observance are wondrously diverse.

Among the far-fetched, irrelevant, and contradictory reasons put forth by its advocates, perhaps the most unique is the following: Infants ought to be baptized because the command to do so may have been among the parchments which Paul left at Troas! Where, we ask, is a "thus saith the Lord"? Its advocates admit that Christian baptism is a New Testament ordinance. We ask, therefore, New Testament authority for its application to infants; but instead of that we generally have a long, labored, involved, and inconclusive argument from the Old Testament.

We are told that baptism came in place of circumcision, and therefore ought to be administered to infants, as that Jewish rite was. We reply: If that is the case is it not most unaccountably strange that "the apostles and elders and brethren" at Jerusalem did not say so, when

this very question of circumcision came before them? The converts at Antioch had been taught by some that circumcision was still binding, and that it was necessary for them to observe it. How easy, then, for the council at Jerusalem to have settled the whole difficulty by simply saying that baptism had taken the place of circumcision, and that therefore it was unnecessary longer to observe the old ordinance. But do we find the remotest shadow of a hint of any such doctrine in the utterances of that body? Certainly not. This silence is inexplicable if the above view was then held.

If baptism came in the place of circumcision evidently the Jewish Christians did not know it, for some of them taught that it was necessary to observe both rites.

If baptism came in place of circumcision, then, to carry out the analogy, it ought to be administered only to males (Gen. 17 : 10); and a man's slaves or servants ought to be included as well as his offspring (Gen. 17 : 23, 27); and, moreover, those who are baptized ought to be

admitted to the Lord's Supper as the circumcised were to the Passover (Exod. 12 : 4).

Then if infant baptism is not scriptural, why observe it? "Oh," says one, "my child might die and I would be very sorry to have it die unbaptized." Ah, it is baptized in order to make sure of its salvation. Then it is baptism that saves the soul, and the death of Christ was needless. The application of water to the body will cleanse and sanctify the soul. But it may be said, "the death of Christ and baptism together will save it." Then Christ's sacrifice was insufficient and needs to be supplemented by something to make its virtue complete. When he died he cried "It is finished," and we believe that redemption was then perfected.

But another says: "We must baptize our children to bring them into the Christian fold." Then baptism is the "door." Where in the holy book is it spoken of as such? Christ says: "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." But does baptism really

bring them into the fold? Do their lives prove that they love the Shepherd and hear his voice? Do they grow up holier than the children of Baptists?

But it may be urged by another that "Christ said, Suffer little children to come unto me." Did he say "Suffer them to be baptized"? Baptists bring their children to Christ, and ask him to bless them, as those mothers did when he was on earth. We believe that it is the duty of every parent to train up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and really to bring them to Christ by leading them to exercise a living faith in him and become his true followers.

But still another may thoughtlessly say: "Oh! we must have our children baptized in order to give them a name." In what part of the Bible is the giving of a name connected with baptism? Do not the children of Baptists have names?

Dr. Lange, already quoted, says: "Would the Protestant church fulfill and attain to its final destiny, the baptism of new-born children must of necessity be

abolished. It has sunk down to a mere formality, without any meaning for the child."—*History of Protestantism*, p. 34.

IX

Baptism: the Mode

Baptists hold that scriptural Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This they believe the word of God plainly teaches.

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. 3 : 5, 6).

"And were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan," etc. (Mark 1 : 5).

"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water" (Matt. 3 : 16).

"And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

And straightway coming up out of the water," etc. (Mark 1 : 9, 10).

"And John also was baptizing in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there" (John 3 : 23).

"And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water," etc. (Acts 8 : 38, 39).

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6 : 4).

"Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col. 2 : 12).

It is clear that they went down into the water, and came up out of the water; but what was the act performed while they were there? This is the point at issue. The act is always expressed by a certain word, in one or other of its forms.

The unvarying use of this one word is very significant. If mode is a matter of

indifference, why is one, distinct, definite term always employed? If a variety of modes was intended, why do we not find a variety of terms used? There was no poverty of words or forms of expression, for the Greek was a remarkably rich and copious language. There were *rantizo*, to sprinkle; *keo*, to pour; *louo*, to wash, and other words to express the various ways in which water could be applied to the person or the person to water. How strange that some of these were not occasionally used by some of the writers in the New Testament! But it is always *baptizo*. Evidently one definite act was intended. Let us then call for evidence concerning the meaning of this word; for if we can ascertain that, we shall know what Christ and his apostles practised and commanded. We turn first to:

LEXICONS OF THE GREEK LANGUAGE.

GROVES. To dip, immerse, immerge, plunge.

SCHREVELIUS. To *merge*, to bathe.

GREENFIELD. To immerse, immerge submerge, sink.

LIDDELL AND SCOTT. To dip in or under water; of ships, to sink them; *Baptisis*, a dipping; *Baptismos*, a dipping in water; *Baptistes*, one that dips.

DAWSON (enlarged and revised by Taylor). To dip, or immerse in water.

DONNEGAN. To immerse repeatedly into a liquid, to submerge.

BASS. To dip, immerse, or plunge in water.

ROBINSON. To dip in, to sink, to immerse; a frequentative in form, but apparently not in signification.

PICKERING. To dip, immerse, submerge, plunge.

DUNBAR. To dip, immerse, submerge, plunge, sink.

SCAPULA. To dip or immerse; also to dye, as we immerse things for the purpose of coloring or washing them.

BAGSTER. To dip, immerse, to cleanse or purify by washing.

JONES. To plunge, to plunge in water, dip, baptize, bury, overwhelm.

It is needless to extend this list. The same meanings are given by Alstidius, Bailey, Schœttgenius, Parkhurst, Pasor,

Hedericus, Young, Robertson, Stockius, Sophocles, Suidas, Schleusner, Bretschneider, Suicerus, Richardson, and others. All agree in giving dip, or immerse, as the ordinary meaning of the word. If the Greek lexicon has ever yet been published which gives sprinkle as the meaning of *baptizo*, it has been most carefully concealed, and kept out of reach of those who have investigated this question. Writers on the subject have sometimes made the assertion that such lexicons exist; but this assertion requires to be substantiated, for grave doubts rest upon the truth of it. But the important fact is that all lexicographers of any note are unanimous in their definition of the ordinary meaning of the word.

Now let us turn to the

STANDARD ENCYCLOPEDIAS.

ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA. "Baptism is derived from the Greek *baptizo*, to dip or wash. The usual mode of performing the ceremony was by immersion, but the practice of baptism by sprinkling

gradually came in, in spite of the opposition of councils and hostile decrees. The Council of Ravenna, A. D. 1311, was the first council of the church which legalized baptism by sprinkling, by leaving it to the choice of the officiating minister."

EDINBURGH ENCYCLOPEDIA. "The first law for sprinkling was obtained in the following manner: Pope Stephen II., being driven from Rome by Astolphus, king of the Lombards, A. D. 753, fled to Pepin, who a short time before had usurped the throne of France. While he remained there the monks of Cressy, in Brittany, consulted him whether, in case of necessity, baptism performed by pouring water on the head of the infant would be lawful, and Stephen replied that it would. But though the truth of this fact be allowed,—which some Catholics deny,—yet pouring and sprinkling were only admitted in cases of necessity. It was not till 1311 that the legislature, in a council held at Ravenna, declared immersion to be indifferent. In this country (Scotland), however, sprinkling was

never practised in ordinary cases until after the Reformation. And in England, even in the reign of Edward VI., immersion was commonly observed. But during the persecution of Mary many persons, most of whom were Scotchmen, fled from England to Geneva, and there gradually imbibed the opinions of that church. In 1556 a book was published at that place containing the forms of prayers and ministrations of sacraments approved by that famous and godly and learned man, John Calvin, in which the administrator is enjoined to take water in his hand and lay it on the child's forehead. These Scottish exiles, who had renounced the authority of the pope, implicitly acknowledged the authority of Calvin, and returning to their own country in 1559, with John Knox at their head, established sprinkling in Scotland. From Scotland this practice made its way into England, in the reign of Elizabeth, but was not authorized by the Established Church."

CHAMBERS' CYCLOPEDIA. "It is however, indisputable that in the primitive church the ordinary mode of baptism

was by immersion, in order to which baptisteries began to be erected in the third, perhaps in the second century." Again, "It was the ordinary practice in England, before the Reformation, to immerse infants, and the fonts in the churches were made large enough for this purpose."

ENCYCLOPEDIA AMERICANA. "Baptism, that is, dipping, immersing, from the Greek word *baptizo*. In the time of the apostles the form of baptism was very simple. The person to be baptized was dipped in a river or vessel, with the words which Christ had ordered. The immersion of the whole body was omitted only in the case of the sick, who could not leave their beds."

KITTO'S CYCLOPEDIA OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE. "The whole body was immersed in water."

NATIONAL CYCLOPEDIA. "The manner in which the rite of baptism was performed appears to have been at first by complete immersion. It was the practice of the English, from the beginning, to immerse the whole body."

SMITH'S BIBLE DICTIONARY. "The language of the New Testament, and of the primitive fathers, sufficiently points to immersion as the common mode of baptism" (Vol. I., p. 241).

CHURCH HISTORIANS.

MOSHEIM, Chancellor of the University of Göttingen in 1755. "In this (first) century baptism was administered in convenient places without the public assemblies, and by immersing the candidates wholly in water."—*Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I., p. 104.

Again he says (second century): "The candidates for it (baptism) were immersed wholly in water, with invocation of the sacred Trinity, according to the Saviour's precept" (Vol. I., p. 179).

NEANDER, already quoted on another subject. "The usual form of submersion at baptism, practised by the Jews, was passed over to the Gentile Christians. Indeed this form was the most suitable to signify that Christ intended to render an object of contemplation by such a symbol; the immersion of the whole man in

the spirit of a new life.”—*Planting and Training of the Christian Church*, p. 161.

GUERICKE, HENRY E. F., Doctor and Professor of Theology, of Halle. “Baptism was originally performed by immersion in the name of the Trinity.”—*Ancient Church History*, p. 141.

VENEMA (seventeenth century). “It is without controversy that baptism in the primitive church was administered by immersion into water, and not by sprinkling. The essential act of baptizing in the second century consisted not in sprinkling, but in immersion into water, in the name of each person of the Trinity. To the essential rite of baptism in the third century pertained immersion and not aspersion, except in cases of necessity, and it was accounted a half-perfect baptism. Immersion in the fourth century was one of those acts that were considered as essential to baptism.”—*Ecclesiastical History*, Cent. I., par. 138; Cent. II., par. 100; Cent. III., par. 51; Cent. IV., par. 100.

KURTZ, Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Dorpat. “Baptism was adminis-

tered by a complete immersion in the name of Christ, or the Triune God.”—*Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I., p. 70.

SCHAFF, DR. PHILIP, of New York. “The usual form of the act was immersion, as is plain from the original meaning of the Greek words, from the analogy of John’s baptism in the Jordan, . . . and finally from the custom of the ancient church, which prevails in the East to this day.”—*History of Ancient Christianity* (First Cent.), Vol. I., p. 123.

“Immersion continued to be the usual form of baptism, especially in the East.”—*Same work* (Fourth Cent.), Vol. II., p. 486.

COMMENTATORS, ETC.

Reformers.

MARTIN LUTHER, on the Sacrament of Baptism (at the beginning). “First, the name baptism is Greek; in Latin it can be rendered immersion, when we immerse anything into water, that it may be all covered with water. And although that custom has now grown out of use with most persons (nor do they wholly

submerge children, but only pour on a little water), yet they ought to be entirely immersed, and immediately drawn out, For this the etymology of the name seems to demand."—*Op. Lutheri*, 1564, Vol. I., folio 319.

JOHN CALVIN. "The word baptize itself signifies immerse, and it is certain that the rite of immersing was observed by the ancient church."—*Institution of the Christian Religion*, Book IV., Chap. XV.

ZWINGLI. "Into his death; when ye were immersed into the water of baptism ye were ingrafted into the death of Christ; that is, the immersion of your body into water was a sign that ye ought to be ingrafted into Christ and his death."—*Annotations on Rom. 6 : 3*, *Works*, Vol. IV., p. 420.

WILLIAM TYNDALE. "The plunging into the water signifieth that we die, and are buried with Christ, as concerning the old life of sin, which is Adam. And the pulling out again signifieth that we rise again with Christ in a new life, full of the Holy Ghost, which shall teach us

and guide us, and work the will of God in us, as thou seest. Rom. 6."—*Obedience of a Christian Man*, edition of 1571, p. 143.

Roman Catholic.

EST, Chancellor of the University of Douay. "For immersion represents to us Christ's burial, and so also his death. For the tomb is the symbol of death, since none but the dead are buried. Moreover, the emersion, which follows the immersion, has a resemblance to a resurrection. We are therefore in baptism conformed not only to the death of Christ, as he has just said, but also to his burial and resurrection."—*Commentary on the Epistles, Rom. 6 : 3.*

BRENNER. "Thirteen hundred years was baptism generally and regularly an immersion of the person under the water, and only in extraordinary cases a sprinkling or pouring with water; the latter was, moreover, disputed as a mode of baptism, nay, even forbidden."—*Historical Exhibition of the Administration of Baptism from Christ to our own Times.*" p. 306.

BISHOP BOSSUET, of Meaux, France (died 1704). "We are able to make it appear, by the acts of councils and by ancient rituals, that for thirteen hundred years baptism was administered by immersion throughout the whole church, as far as possible."

Episcopalian.

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON. "Anciently, those who were baptized were immersed, and buried in the water, to represent their death to sin, and then did rise up out of the water, to signify their entrance upon a new life, and to those the apostle alludes, Rom. 6 : 4-6."—*Sermons*, Vol. VII., p. 179.

BISHOP TAYLOR. "And the ancient churches did not, in their baptism, sprinkle water with their hands, but immersed the catechumen or the infant." After some references in proof of this assertion he adds: "All which are a perfect conviction, that the custom of the ancient churches was not sprinkling, but immersion, in pursuance to the sense of the word in the commandment, and the ex-

ample of our blessed Saviour.”—*Rule of Conscience*, Book III., Chap. IV., Rule 15.

DR. WHITBY. “It being so expressly declared here (Rom. 6 : 4 and Col. 2 : 12) that we are ‘buried with Christ in baptism,’ by being buried under water, and the argument to oblige us to a conformity to his death by dying to sin, being taken hence ; and this immersion being religiously observed by all Christians for thirteen centuries, and approved by our church, and the change of it into sprinkling, without either any allowance from the author of this institution, or any license from any council of the church, it were to be wished that this custom might be again of general use.”—*Commentary on the New Testament, Rom. 6 : 4.*

CONYBEARE AND HOWSON. “It is needless to add that baptism was (unless in exceptional cases) administered by immersion, the convert being plunged beneath the surface of the water, to represent his death to the life of sin, and then raised from his momentary burial to represent his resurrection to the life of

righteousness. It must be a subject of regret that the general discontinuance of this original form of baptism (though perhaps necessary in our Northern climates) has rendered obscure to popular apprehension some very important passages of Scripture."—*Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, Vol. I., p. 439.

Again they say, in a note on the passage, "Buried with him by baptism," "This passage cannot be understood, unless it be borne in mind that the primitive baptism was by immersion" (Vol. II., p. 169).

DR. CUNNINGHAM GEIKIE, author of the "Life and Words of Christ," the most scholarly work of the kind, says in reference to the baptism of Jesus: "John resisted no longer, and leading Jesus into the stream, the rite was performed. . . Holy and pure before sinking under the water, he must yet have risen from them with the light of a higher glory in his countenance. . . Past years had been buried in the waters of the Jordan. He entered them as Jesus, the Son of Man; he rose from them the Christ of God."

DR. ELLICOTT, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, and President of the New Testament Revision Company in England, and Dr. PLUMPTRE, Professor of Exegesis of the New Testament at King's College, London, say in their recently issued New Testament Commentary, on Matt. 3 : 1 : "The baptism was, as the name implied, an immersion." On ver. 6 they say : "They came confessing their sins, *i. e.*, as the position of the word (baptize) implies, in the closest possible connection with the act of immersion." On ver. 11, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost," etc., they say : "As heard and understood at the time, the baptism with the Holy Ghost would imply that the souls thus baptized would be plunged, as it were, in that creative and informing Spirit which was the source of life and holiness and wisdom."

Presbyterian.

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES.
 "In this phrase the apostle seemeth to allude to the ancient manner of baptism, which was to dip the persons baptized,

and, as it were, bury them under the water for a while, and then to draw them out of it and lift them up, to represent the burial of our old man and our resurrection to newness of life.”—*Annotations, published in folio, under the auspices of the Assembly; Annotations on Rom. 6 : 3, 4.*

DR. CHALMERS. “We doubt not that the prevalent style of administration in the apostles’ days was by an actual submerging of the whole body under water. We advert to this for the purpose of throwing light on the analogy that is instituted in these verses. Jesus Christ by death underwent this sort of baptism by an immersion under the surface of the ground, whence he soon emerged again by his resurrection. We, by being baptized into his death, are conceived to have made a similar translation, in the act of descending under the water of baptism, to have resigned an old life, and in the act of ascending to emerge into a second or a new life.”—*Lectures on the Epistles to the Romans, on 6 : 3, 4.*

DR. GEORGE CAMPBELL, President of

Marischal College, Aberdeen. "The word *baptizein*, both in sacred authors and in classical, signifies 'to dip,' 'to plunge,' 'to immerse,' and was rendered by Tertullian, the oldest of the Latin fathers, *tingere*, the term used for dyeing cloth, which was by immersion. It is always construed suitably to this meaning."—*Translation of the Gospels, Matt. 3 : 11.*

This same writer says: "I have heard a disputant, in defiance of etymology and use, maintain that the word rendered in the New Testament, baptize, means more properly to sprinkle than to plunge, and in defiance of all antiquity that the former method was the earliest, and for many centuries the most general practice of baptizing. One who argues in this manner never fails, with persons of knowledge, to betray the cause he would defend; and though with respect to the vulgar, bold assertions generally succeed as well as arguments, sometimes better, yet a candid mind will disdain to take help of a falsehood, even in support of the truth."—*Lectures on Systematic Theology*, p. 480.

Wesleyan.

JOHN WESLEY. “ ‘Buried with him by baptism,’ alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.”—*Comment on Rom. 6 : 4.*

DR. ADAM CLARKE. “ ‘We are buried with him by baptism into death.’ It is probable that the apostle here alludes to the mode of administering baptism by immersion, the whole body being put under the water, which seemed to say, the man is drowned, is dead ; and when he came up out of the water, he seemed to have a resurrection to life ; the man is risen again ; he is alive ! ”—*Comment on Rom. 6 : 4.*

Again, on the passage, “baptized for the dead,” he says : “ But as they receive baptism as an emblem of death, in voluntarily going under the water, so they receive it as an emblem of the resurrection unto eternal life, in coming up out of the water ; thus they are baptized for the dead in perfect faith of the resurrection.”—*Comment on 1 Cor. 15 : 29.*

The above are but a few of the ex-

tracts of similar import which might be given. All the great German commentators and critics, such as Tholuck, Meyer, Gesenius, De Wette, Bretschneider, Fritsche, Winer, Rheinwald, Hahn, etc., have said the same thing, as also Bloomfield, Doddridge, Lightfoot, Moses Stuart, Wall, Baxter, Whitefield, Tower-son, and many more. Volumes might be filled with such quotations stating, not in ambiguous or equivocal language, but in the plainest, most unqualified terms, that baptism, as instituted and practised by Christ and the apostles, and continued for centuries, was immersion, and that only. The man who stands up in these days to defend sprinkling or pouring as the primitive mode of baptism, has all the learned Christian world against him.

It is sometimes said, when we cite the published utterances of eminent biblical scholars of different denominations in support of our views, that we build our faith and practice more on the words of men than on the word of God. This is false. We build our faith and practice

on nothing but the word of God. And we make such quotations only to show that the highest authorities in ecclesiastical history and Scripture interpretation in all communions have really taken the same views of God's word which we do, whatever their practice may have been. Thus the doctrines which we hold because we believe them to be God's truth, are supported by the ancient history and the scholarship of Christendom.

But it is said, "Why quote such utterances, when it is well known that many of the men who made them held at the same time the faith and practice of the denominations to which they belonged?" We reply that with that we have nothing to do. To their own Master they stand or fall. Whether they taught and practised contrary to their convictions of truth is not for us to inquire. The fact remains that they unanimously admit the truth and scripturalness and antiquity of those very doctrines and practices which we believe the divine oracles plainly teach. But why did they make such admissions? Genuine scholarship and a

Church still rigidly adheres; and the most illustrious and venerable portion of it, that of the Byzantine Empire, absolutely repudiates and ignores any other mode of administration as essentially invalid. The Latin Church has wholly altered the mode, and with the two exceptions of the cathedral of Milan, and the sect of the Baptists, a few drops of water are now the Western substitute for the three-fold plunge into the rushing rivers, or the wide baptisteries of the East."—*Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church*, p. 29.

ALEXANDER DE STOURDZA (of the Greek Church), Russian State Councillor, says: "The distinctive characteristic of the institution of baptism is immersion, *baptisma*, which cannot be omitted without destroying the mysterious sense of the sacrament, and contradicting at the same time the etymological signification of the word, which serves to designate it. The church of the West has, then, departed from the example of Jesus Christ; she has obliterated the whole sublimity of the exterior sign; in short, she com-

mits an abuse of words and of ideas in practising baptism by aspersion, this very term being in itself a derisive contradiction. The verb *baptizo*, *immergo*, has in fact, but one sole acceptation. It signifies literally, and always, to plunge. Baptism and immersion are therefore identical, and to say baptism by aspersion, is as if one should say immersion by aspersion, or any other absurdity of the same nature."—*Considerations on the Doctrine and Spirit of the Orthodox Church*, Stuttgart, 1816, p. 87.

PROFESSOR TIMAYENIS, of the New York Hellenic Institute, delivered a lecture on "Greece" before a large non-denominational assembly at Chautauqua, in August, 1879. He is a native Greek, born in Smyrna, educated in the schools of Athens, and a member of the Greek Church.

After discussing a number of interesting questions concerning his country, he said: "The Bible is the book of Greece. It needs not translation with the modern Greeks." And again: "All our services are read in the original tongue in which

St. Paul and the other apostles wrote their Epistles.”

Further on he says: “The Greeks baptize, of course. The baptism of their infants takes place at six months after birth. If the child is going to die they believe it must be baptized at once. I am not able to say whether they believe the child will go to Paradise or not, but there is a great horror of having a child die without baptism. They baptize in the real way. The word *bapto* means nothing but immerse in the water. Baptism means nothing but immersion. In the Greek language we have a different word for sprinkling. When you put a piece of wood into the water, and cover it entirely, you baptize, you do what is expressed by the Greek word *bapto*. I am ready to discuss this with any divine about the Greek word. Sprinkling is not what the Bible teaches; that is a fact you may depend on. I know that this custom is too deeply rooted in some congregations to be taken away easily, but the Baptists have the best of you on this point. . . That is the word we use, to

dip; you cannot go back on it. It is our every-day word. So if I dip a man I baptize him. I say you must cover somebody entirely with water to use baptize as the Greeks use it to-day."

This clear and decisive statement by one who speaks the language in which the New Testament was written, is confirmed by Rev. D. Z. Sakellarios, of Athens, in a letter to the author, dated June 25, 1881. He also is a native Greek, brought up in the Greek Church. He says: "The true meaning of the word *baptizo* is expressed by the word itself. *Rantizo* means to sprinkle; *louo*, to wash; *epikeo*, to pour upon. *Bapto*, or *baptizo*, means to immerse or baptize." He also states that baptism in the Greek Church is always by immersion, the font being called a *kolumbethra*, literally a swimming bath.

The Greek Church then, numbering about ninety-seven million four hundred and seventy-three thousand, and the Nestorians, Maronites, Copts, Armenians, Jacobite-Syrians, Abyssinians, and other Oriental Christian sects to the number of

about nine or ten millions more, making together over one hundred millions, have from the first, and still do practise immersion in baptism. That is, according to Dr. Wall, Dean Stanley, and others, all Christians in the world except the Church of Rome, and those who came out from her at the Reformation, retain the original mode of baptism.

BAPTISTERIES.

We will now turn to another class of witnesses, by no means the least interesting and satisfactory. Their testimony is a silent one, but most convincing. I refer to the ancient baptisteries.

The most ancient one is found in the Catacomb of San Ponziano at Rome. It was in those subterranean passages and chambers that the early Christians of that city sought refuge during the dark days of pagan persecution. Here they lived and worshiped and were buried. And here they constructed baptisteries for the administration of the sacred rite. Through the Catacomb of San Ponziano a stream of water runs, the channel of

which is diverted into a reservoir, which was used for administering baptism by immersion from the first to the fourth century. The dimensions of the reservoir, which is still full of water, are four and a half feet in length, three and a half in width, and three and a half in depth. (See Northcote's *Roman Catacombs*, and *Archæology of Baptism*, by Dr. Cote, of Rome.)

On the wall immediately above this font is a fresco painting representing the baptism of our Saviour. The following explanation of the painting is from Bottari's "*Roma Sotterranea*," Tomo I., p. 194: "Upon the wall, over the arch, the Redeemer is represented up to his waist in the waters of the river Jordan, and upon his head rests the right hand of John the Baptist, standing on the shore. It is by mistake that modern artists represent Christ in the Jordan up to his knees only, and John pouring water on his head. And although on the portico of the church of San Lorenzo, outside of the wall of Rome, that saint is seen in a painting pouring water upon the head of San Ro-

mano, this was certainly not the case, as that picture is far more modern (twelfth century) than those of the first centuries, and the artist was evidently ignorant or wrongly informed concerning the acts of San Lorenzo. It is not improbable, however, that subsequently it became customary to pour water upon the head of the catechumen after he had been immersed. On the other shore an angel is seen upon a cloud, holding the Saviour's robe; the Holy Ghost descends like a dove and alights upon the Redeemer. John places his hand upon the head of Christ to immerse him."

A relic of this kind is of special importance from the fact that the Christians who worshiped in the Catacombs were, in purity of doctrine and practice, nearest to the churches of the apostolic age. This baptistery and painting in the Catacomb of San Ponziano carry us back almost to the time of the apostles.

There are at this day at least sixty-three ancient baptisteries existing in different parts of Italy, which many travelers have examined and described.

One of the most notable is the baptistery of Constantine, at Rome. It is in connection with the famous church of St. John of Lateran, the oldest, and in some respects the most sacred of all the churches of Rome; the "*omnium urbis et orbis ecclesiarum mater et caput.*" This baptistery I myself saw and examined in the month of February, 1876. It belongs to the fourth century. The building stands at a little distance from the church, is octagonal in form, and very highly embellished. In the center is a circular basin, twenty-five feet in diameter and three feet deep, lined and paved with marble. A descent of three steps leads to the bottom of the basin, which is provided with a small outlet for the purpose of emptying it after the ceremony had been performed. The water was conducted to the basin from the adjoining Claudian aqueduct, the remains of which are still standing. On the architrave, supported by the columns of porphyry which surround the basin, is a long Latin inscription, which clearly shows what its use was in former ages.

References to this interesting relic, and to its use for immersion, are found in the works of ancient Italian authors.

We might go on for hours describing the baptisteries of Rome, Naples, Milan, Florence, Pisa, Ravenna, etc. Such structures are to be found in all the principal cities of Italy. But the description given above will suffice to give a general idea of all. One main feature exists in them all, viz., the large basin, three or four feet deep, with steps descending into it. There they stand, as they have stood for many centuries, silent, yet unanswerable witnesses to the practice of Christians in the early ages.

Remains of the same kind are found in France, Belgium, Germany, and other parts of Europe.

The Venerable Bede, the ecclesiastical historian of Great Britain, says that Paulinus, the apostle of the North of England, who baptized King Edwin, at York, A. D. 627, baptized also great numbers of people in the rivers Glen and Swale.—*Ecclesiastical History, Lib. II., Cap. XIV.*

The following description of one of the natural baptisteries used by Paulinus is given by a writer in an English paper: "About eleven miles from the Cheviot Hills, separating England and Scotland, and about the same distance from Alnwick Castle, the celebrated seat of the dukes of Northumberland, and near the village of Harbottle, there is a remarkable fountain. It rises on the top of a slight elevation, and just now it is thirty-four feet long, twenty feet in breadth, and two feet in depth; but it is capable of being made deeper by placing a board over an opening at one side. The traditions of Northumberland point out this fountain as one of the baptisteries of Paulinus, the apostle of the North of England, where he immersed three thousand during the Easter of A. D. 627." The "History of Northumberland" contains and confirms the testimony of tradition. An ancient statue, as large as life, which formerly lay prostrate in the spring, now stands against a tree on its margin. The drapery of "the bishop," as the statue is called, shows

that it was set up at a very remote period, probably only two or three centuries after Paulinus, whom it was doubtless intended to represent. A large crucifix now stands in the center of the fountain, which bears the following inscription: "In this fountain, called the 'Lady's Well,' on the introduction of Christianity in the Saxon reign of Edwin, and early in the seventh century, Paulinus, an English bishop, baptized about three thousand people. The 'Lady's Well' is some thirty or forty miles from Newcastle, and is full of interest to the antiquary."—W. Cathcart, D. D., in *Religious Herald*.

DEAN STANLEY, already quoted as to the subjects of baptism, says in his "Nineteenth Century" article, above referred to: "What then was baptism in the apostolic age? . . . In that early age the scene of the transaction was either some deep wayside spring or well, as for the Ethiopian, or some rushing river, as the Jordan, or some vast reservoir, as at Jericho or Jerusalem, whither, as in the baths of Caracalla, at Rome, the whole

population resorted for swimming or washing.”

Again he says: “We now pass to the changes in the form itself. For the first thirteen centuries the almost universal practice of baptism was that of which we read in the New Testament, and which is the very meaning of the word ‘baptize’—that those who were baptized were plunged, submerged, immersed into the water. That practice is still, as we have seen, continued in Eastern churches. In the Western churches it still lingers among Roman Catholics in the solitary instance of the cathedral of Milan, among Protestants in the austere sect of the Baptists. It lasted long in the Middle Ages. Even the Icelanders, who at first shrank from the water of their freezing lakes, were reconciled when they found that they could use the warm water of the geysers. And the cold climate of Russia has not been found an obstacle to its continuance throughout that vast empire. Even in the Church of England it is still observed in theory. Elizabeth and Edward the Sixth were both im-

mersed. The rubric in the Public Baptism of Infants enjoins that, unless for special cases, they are to be dipped, not sprinkled. But in practice it gave way since the beginning of the seventeenth century. . . It (immersion) had no doubt the sanction of the apostles and of their Master. It had the sanction of the venerable churches of the early ages, and of the sacred countries of the East. Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient church (except in the rare cases of death-beds or extreme necessity) as no baptism at all. . . The change from immersion to sprinkling has set aside the larger part of the apostolic language regarding baptism, and has altered the very meaning of the word."

While there is no doubt that this eminent scholar is worthy of full confidence as an ecclesiastical historian, and we accept his statements as to historical facts, yet when he comes to matters of opinion, we dissent most absolutely and emphatically from the grounds on which he justifies the change from immersion to sprinkling, viz., that man's convenience

and tastes and preferences may modify and override the commands of Christ and the practice of the apostles. If this principle is once admitted, where shall we stop? We may go on introducing changes and innovations until there is scarcely a feature of the original left. This principle lies at the bottom of all the corruptions which disfigure Christianity to-day. It is a monstrous doctrine, that man has a right to modify his Lord's commands, and substitute his own fancies and inventions.

The Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England contains the following directions.

“For the Public Baptism of Infants :

“Then the Priest shall take the child into his hands and shall say to the Godfathers and Godmothers, Name this child.

“And then naming it after them (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it) he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily.

“But if they certify that the child is weak it shall suffice to pour water upon it.

“The Public Baptism of such as are of riper years :

“Then shall the Priest take each person to be baptized by the right hand, and placing him conveniently by the Font, according to his discretion, shall ask the Godfathers and Godmothers the name ; and then shall dip him in the water, or pour water upon him.”

And yet there are persons, with that book in their hands, and who ought to know what it contains, seeing that they regard it as such high authority, who will ridicule the Baptists for “dipping.” What refreshing consistency!

One of the weak objections sometimes urged by the opponents of Baptist principles is this, that the Jordan was such an inconsiderable stream that there was not sufficient depth of water for the immersion of the multitudes by John.

Lieutenant Lynch, of the United States Navy, was sent by his government, in 1848, in charge of an expedition to explore the river Jordan and the Dead Sea, for antiquarian and scientific purposes. They passed down the entire

length of the Jordan in boats, from the lake of Galilee to the Dead Sea.

“The river was found to vary in width from seventy-five to two hundred feet; and in depth from three to twelve feet. At Bethabara, where tradition has fixed the place of our Saviour’s baptism, and where John baptized the multitudes, Lieutenant Lynch gives the width as one hundred and twenty feet, and the greatest depth as twelve feet.”—*Lynch’s Dead Sea Expedition*, Chap. X., XI.

Rev. Dr. Edward Robinson, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, who visited Palestine in 1840, fully corroborates the above statements as to the abundance of water in the Jordan. (Robinson’s “Biblical Researches,” Vol. II., Sec. 10, pp. 257–267.) Also Dean Stanley, who traveled in the Holy Land in 1853 (“Syria and Palestine,” Chap. VII., pp. 306, 307); and Dr. Thomson, for a quarter of a century a missionary in Syria, who visited the Jordan and witnessed the bathing of the pilgrims in 1857 (“The Land and the Book,” Vol. II., pp. 445, 446), add their testimony to these same facts.

The author of this little book visited the Holy Land in December, 1878, and bathed in the Jordan at the traditional place of baptism, east of Jericho. At that time the water was low, and at that particular place was comparatively shallow, and yet it was waist-deep at one-third of the way across, and to have gone farther would have required swimming. Both above and below this place it was much deeper.

It has also been said that there were no facilities at Jerusalem for the immersion of three thousand people in one day.

Now, the fact is that the water supply of the city was very abundant, considering that Jerusalem was but a small city comparatively. There were, within the walls and outside, in the immediate vicinity, various tanks and reservoirs of very large proportions. Some of them may be briefly described.

“The pool of Bethesda is three hundred and sixty feet long, one hundred and thirty wide, and seventy-five deep.

“The pool of Siloam is fifty-three feet long, eighteen wide, and nineteen deep.

It now holds two or three feet of water, which can readily be increased to a much greater depth. It was to this pool that Christ sent the blind man to wash (John 9 : 7). Therefore it might be used for bathing purposes.

“The Upper Pool is three hundred and sixteen feet long, two hundred and eighteen wide, and eighteen deep, covering an acre and a half of ground.

“The pool of Hezekiah is two hundred and forty feet long, one hundred and forty-four wide, and is partly filled with water.

“The Lower Pool, or pool of Gihon, is five hundred and ninety-two feet long, two hundred and sixty wide, and forty deep, having an area of more than three and a half acres. The pool is now dry, but so late as the time of the Crusaders was fully supplied with water, and free to the use of all.”

There were several other pools in or near the city. They were all constructed so as to make a descent into the water safe and easy, and were doubtless in constant use for purposes of ablution.

For corroboration of the above descriptions see Robinson's "Biblical Researches," Vol. I., pp. 480-515, and Thomson's "The Land and the Book," Vol. II., pp. 64, 446.

One of the most eminent authorities as to the above facts is Doctor Barclay, for many years a missionary in Jerusalem. His book is "The City of the Great King."

It has sometimes been objected that the Christians would not have been allowed to use these pools for baptism. But do we not read immediately after the record of the baptism of the three thousand (Acts 2 : 41), that they had favor with all the people? (Ver. 47.)

Doctor Thomson, the missionary to Palestine already quoted, in seeking to locate the scene of the eunuch's baptism by Philip, says: "He would then have met the chariot somewhere southwest of Latron. There is a fine stream of water, called Murubbah, deep enough even in June to satisfy the utmost wishes of our Baptist friends."—*The Land and the Book*, Vol. II., p. 310.

The objection has frequently been raised that the three thousand persons baptized on the day of Pentecost could not have been immersed because it would be impossible for such a great number to be baptized in that manner in a single day. This statement is based on ignorance. To show that it is simply a rash conjecture, made without any data, it is only necessary to cite a few facts.

At Velumpilly, ten miles north of Ongole, in the Madras Presidency, in the month of July, 1878, two thousand two hundred and twenty-two persons were baptized by immersion in one day. The administration of the ordinance was characterized by due decorum and solemnity. There were six administrators, but only two of them at a time were engaged in baptizing. They relieved each other when necessary. It occupied about nine hours.

At Ongole, the writer baptized one hundred and eighty-seven persons on Sunday evening, April 11, 1880. There was no undue haste. The usual formula was deliberately pronounced at the bap-

tism of each one. The service occupied about an hour and a half. More instances of this kind could be adduced. These are sufficient, however, for our purpose.

It may, perhaps, be thought by some that I have dwelt at unnecessary length on the proofs of that which is freely admitted by so many. I reply that while it is true that the greatest Christian scholars acknowledge the truth and scripturalness of our views of baptism, both as regards the subjects and the mode, yet there are many persons who, never having looked fully into these questions, consider us in error; and it is against our baptismal views particularly that the strongest opposition and most bitter prejudice of our Pedobaptist friends are manifested. Many who speak against our doctrine and practice of baptism evidently do not know the testimony of history with regard to it, nor what so many truly learned and candid Pedobaptists have written. These facts, then, must be my justification if, indeed, any is required, for devoting so much time to this part of the subject.

X**Close Communion**

We now come to that much misunderstood and misrepresented subject, that terrible bugbear—close communion. What strange misapprehensions exist in regard to it, and what groundless objections are urged against it! Surely no subject has ever been more unfairly treated. What pointless discussions and illogical reasonings have been expended upon it! And what an amount of undeserved opprobrium has been heaped upon its advocates! Let us look at it fairly, and we will find that all the prejudice against it is utterly without foundation.

In the first place, Baptists believe on this subject just what all other evangelical denominations of Christians believe, viz., that baptism should precede the Lord's Supper. They believe that the whole tenor of Scripture teaching on the subject, as well as the nature and mutual relation of the two ordinances, establishes a fixed order between them, and

that to place the Lord's Supper before baptism is to reverse this order. The highest authorities might be cited to show that this is the almost universal belief of Christendom. Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Congregationalists, etc., hold that none ought to partake of the second ordinance who have not observed the first. None of these admit the unbaptized to the Lord's table. Now this is close communion. The only really open communionists are those (if any such exist) who hold that no conditions or qualifications are necessary to a right approach to the Lord's Supper, and who admit all who choose to come, baptized or unbaptized, converted or unconverted. As soon as any qualification whatever is required the communion ceases to be open. All denominations require certain qualifications: therefore, all are close communionists. And all make baptism an indispensable qualification: therefore, all are close communionists on the very ground which is so much complained of in Baptists. Strictly speaking, then, Baptists

are no more chargeable with close communion than others. So that all the unkind feelings and hard words with which they are so often assailed on the communion question are unreasonable, and betray either a state of ignorance that is pitiable, or an ungenerous disposition that is certainly very unlike the spirit of Christ. Thus far, then, Baptists and all others are agreed, viz., that baptism should precede the Lord's Supper.

Secondly. Already has been shown what we believe to be scriptural baptism; that ground need not, therefore, be gone over again at any length. In brief, we believe that the infallible standard—the word of God—plainly teaches, and ecclesiastical history and the highest Christian scholarship fully confirm the doctrine, that Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that nothing else answers the requirements of God's word.

Now put these two things together, and what is the result? We are led immediately, inevitably, and logically to

the Baptist position on the communion question. While we hold that baptism is a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper, and that nothing but the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Trinity, is scriptural baptism, we cannot occupy any other ground than that of restricted communion. Any other course would be a most dishonest compromise of principle. Any one with the slightest perception or reasoning power must at once see this.

Our friends who object to our views and practice in this matter must first show us that one or the other of the two positions defined above is unscriptural and erroneous. They could hardly ask us to stultify our reason, and be dishonest to our convictions by practising free communion while holding the views which we do. In order to make way for a change of practice one of our positions must first be abandoned. Which shall it be? Shall it be the first, viz., that baptism must precede the Lord's Supper? That could hardly be expected when we believe so firmly that it is scriptural;

and other denominations could scarcely ask this of us, when they hold it just as firmly as we do. Shall it be the second? But how can we do that, when to our minds nothing is more plainly taught in God's book than that believers only are the proper subjects and immersion only the proper mode of baptism; and when, in addition, we have the universal testimony of history, and the admissions of the best and most learned in all branches of Christ's church to show that our understanding of Scripture on these points is correct? As well might we be asked to adopt the consecrated wafer, instead of bread and wine, at the Lord's table, as to adopt infant sprinkling instead of scriptural baptism. It is plain, then, that we cannot be loyal to God's word, as we understand it, and abandon either of the above mentioned positions. And while we hold them, it is equally plain that we cannot be open-communionists. To do that we would have to trample on the teachings of the New Testament, stifle our convictions of truth, and bear about with us continually the con-

sciousness of being inconsistent, illogical, and dishonest. The only logical way for a Baptist to become an advocate of free communion is to deny that the Scriptures require baptism before the Lord's Supper. If he can firmly believe that, then the path is open. This is the ground taken by most of those Baptists who hold open communion views. But how can we accept that doctrine when the word teaches us that the breaking of bread was observed by the churches, and that the churches were composed of those who, having believed on Jesus, were baptized? Let it be shown where the Lord's Supper was observed by any others than companies of Christian disciples; and then let it be shown where there were companies of Christian disciples who were unbaptized. Till this is done we must believe that the blessed commemorative ordinance was designed for baptized believers in Christ.

Clearly, then, the difference on this subject between Baptists and other denominations is not in reference to communion, but in reference to baptism;

therefore let us be charged with close baptism, but not with close communion. There is no controversy between us and other Christian bodies concerning the necessity of baptism preceding communion; that tenet is common to all. The real point at issue is baptism, the subjects and mode. Therefore, let ours be called close baptism, or let others be called close communionists, in common with ourselves; either will be fair, and will satisfy us.

The following extracts will show that our position is regarded as perfectly logical and consistent by thinking men of other denominations.

The distinguished Doctor Griffin, president of Williams College, says: "I agree with the advocates of close communion in two points: 1. That baptism is the initiating ordinance which introduces us into the visible church; of course, where there is no baptism there are no visible churches. (2) That we ought not to commune with those who are not baptized, and of course are not church-members, even if we regard them

as Christians. Should a pious Quaker so far depart from his principles as to wish to commune with me at the Lord's table, while yet he refused to be baptized, I could not receive him; because there is such a relationship established between the two ordinances that I have no right to separate them."

Rev. Dr. Hibbard, a very able writer among the Methodists of the United States, says: "The charge of close communion is no more applicable to the Baptists than to us, inasmuch as the question of church fellowship with them is determined by as liberal principles as it is with any other Protestant churches, so far, I mean, as the present subject is concerned, *i. e.*, it is determined by valid baptism."

"To the question, whom shall we admit to the Lord's table? the close-communion Baptist gives precisely the same answer with the great body of those Congregationalists and Presbyterians who are so prone to reproach them with their close communion."—*New York Independent*.

It is worthy of remark "that in one direction, Pedobaptists carry their practice of close communion much farther than the Baptists do; inasmuch as they exclude from the Lord's table a large class of their own members, viz., baptized children, not allowing them communion, though they are members. If children are suitable subjects for baptism, it seems most unreasonable to exclude them from the communion." There can be no doubt that they were admitted to it when infant baptism began to be practised. It was clearly seen that if they were fit for one ordinance, they were fit for the other also.

When it cannot be denied that our position on the communion question is scriptural and logical, then objection is made to us, usually in one of the following forms :

We are told that inviting to the Lord's Supper none but those who have been baptized, we make too much of baptism; that we make it a saving ordinance. To this our only and oft-repeated reply is: " We do not make it a saving ordinance,

nor do we attach any more importance to it than is given to it by the Holy Scriptures. If the divine word makes it binding upon every disciple as his first duty after believing in Christ, then we must do the same. We dare not change the Master's commands."

It is sometimes said: "Your refusal to invite Pedobaptists to commune with you implies that you do not regard them as Christians." Not at all. We have no such thoughts in reference to them. But we ask, would Pedobaptist churches invite to their communion those whom they regarded as unbaptized, even though they believed them to be converted persons?

The objection may take this form: "It is the Lord's table; why, therefore, do you not invite all who profess to be the Lord's people?" We reply that it is the Lord's table, therefore we are not at liberty to invite any but those who, according to his word, are qualified. If it were our table, we might invite whom we pleased, and modify the qualifications as we saw fit, or do away with them alto-

gether; but we are not at liberty to change the institutions of our Heavenly King.

Again, it is said: "We hope to commune together in heaven, why not then on earth?" One can hardly suppose that such a question as this is asked seriously; for how can a supposition as to what we may do in heaven regulate our conduct on earth when we have the precept and example of Christ and his apostles to regulate it?

It is sometimes sentimentally said, in favor of open communion: "How approvingly the angels would look down on such scenes!" To this we reply, one word from the Bible is worth a thousand guesses as to what the angels would approve or disapprove. We suspect, however, that the angels look most approvingly upon such as faithfully keep Christ's ordinances as they are delivered to them in his holy word, neither adding thereto nor taking therefrom anything to suit our fancies or feelings.

Surely it should be the aim of all Christians to reproduce in this age, as

nearly as possible, primitive Christianity, and certainly the surest way to do this is to adhere firmly to the teachings of Christ and his apostles, and to copy closely the New Testament model.

XI

Antiquity of Baptist Principles

If these principles are scriptural, then they are as old as Christianity. And it is because we believe them to be the principles committed by Christ and his apostles to the primitive churches that we hold them. But let us see what traces of them we can discover during the intervening ages.

We hold that the true succession is succession of doctrines and principles, of faith and works; that the genuine representatives of the primitive Christians, the true successors of the apostles, are those who hold their doctrines and follow their example, as they followed Christ.

The Baptist claim to continuity from

primitive times is nothing more nor less than this: That during all the intervening ages there have been persons, at times numerous and prominent, at other times scattered by persecution and hidden, holding substantially the same distinctive principles we hold to-day. But their history is to be "traced by their sufferings for the truth, by the stains of their martyrs' blood, by the light of their martyrs' fires."

President Edwards, speaking of the long, dreary interval between the rise of Antichrist and the Reformation, says: "In every age of this dark time there appeared particular persons in all parts of Christendom who bore a testimony against the corruptions and tyranny of the Church of Rome. There is no age of Antichrist—even in the darkest times of all—but ecclesiastical historians mention a great many by name who pleaded for the ancient purity of doctrine and worship. God was pleased to maintain an uninterrupted succession of witnesses through the whole time, in Germany, France, Britain, and other countries.

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And there were numbers in every age who were persecuted and put to death for this testimony.”—*Works*, Vol. I., p. 460.

Those who during this long period stood out boldly against the increasing corruptions of Christianity, the usurped power of the clergy, and the union of Church and State, and who plead earnestly for liberty of conscience, the sole authority of God’s word, and the purity of the church, were known by different names in different ages and countries; but their leading principles were substantially the same. In the earlier ages there were the Novatians, Donatists, Paulicians, and others, and in later times the Waldenses, Albigenses, or Vaudois.

It is not pretended that all these were Baptists in all respects, and we by no means endorse all the sentiments held by these different bodies. It is only claimed that the distinguishing principles of the Baptists have had advocates in every age, and that too among those who are universally regarded as the preservers of primitive Christianity during the dark ages.

In the third century were the Novatians. It was in Rome that their principles began to be declared. The leading principle which distinguished them, and for which they earnestly contended, was the purity of the church. In fact, it was on account of their adherence to this principle that their dissent and separate organization took place. The dominant church had become very lax in discipline, and looked leniently upon gross offenses in its members. The Novatians maintained that the church should be holy. They were called *Cathari*, or Puritans; and they rebaptized those who came over to them from the Catholics.—*See Mosheim, Cent. III., Part II., Chap. V.*

In the fourth century the Donatists seceded from the rapidly degenerating church. It was in Northern Africa that this took place. Concerning their principles, D. C. Eddy, D. D., says: "A French historian (Crispin) gives the creed of the Donatists when he charges them with holding the following things: 'First, for purity of church-members, by

asserting that none ought to be admitted into the church but such as are visibly true believers and real saints ; secondly, for purity of church discipline ; thirdly, for the independence of each church ; and fourthly, they baptized again those whose first baptism they had reason to doubt.' ”—*Roger Williams and the Baptists*, p. 56.

T. G. Jones, D. D., makes the following quotations : “ Twisck, ‘Chron.,’ Book VI., p. 201, says : ‘The followers of Donatus were all one with the Anabaptists, denying baptism to children, admitting believers only thereto who desired the same, and maintaining that none ought to be forced to any belief.’ D’Anvers, in his ‘Treatise on Baptism,’ says : ‘Austin’s third and fourth books against the Donatists demonstrate that they denied infant baptism. And therefore Oslander, in his “Epit. Cent. XVI,” p. 175, saith that our modern Anabaptists were the same with the Donatists of old.’ ”—*The Baptists*, p. 70.

Rev. Thomas Long, prebendary of Exeter, published a “History of the Donat-

ists," in 1677, in which he says (page 103), that "they did not only rebaptize the adults that came over to them, but refused to baptize children, contrary to the practice of the church, as appears by several discourses of St. Augustine."

According to Doctor Eddy: "Neander asserts that with the Donatists is to be found the true historical origin of the Waldenses."

In the seventh century and onward for several hundred years the most prominent witnesses for the truth and opposers of the widespread corruption and ritualism of the dominant church, were the Paulicians. Armenia was the principal scene of their earnest protests and terrible persecutions. They became exceedingly numerous, as may be judged from the statement of Mosheim, that, under the Empress Theodora, between A. D. 841 and 855, about one hundred thousand of them were put to death. We are entirely dependent on the writings of their bitter enemies for a knowledge of their doctrines, so that they are probably much misrepresented. This we learn,

however, that they protested earnestly against the many errors, both in doctrine and practice, which had grown up in the Catholic Church, and condemned the multiplied forms and ceremonies, the ritualism of that age, such as the worship of the Virgin Mary and the saints, the adoration of the cross and of images, etc. They advocated great simplicity of worship. Their opposition to the superstitious and idolatrous worship which then prevailed doubtless led some of them to an extreme position on the opposite side, and disposed them to do away with external forms. Mosheim says: "They rejected baptism as a rite of no use as regards salvation, and especially the baptism of infants."—*Cent. XI.*, Part II., Chap. V. Large numbers of them afterward removed to the provinces of Bulgaria and Thrace, whence they spread into Italy, so that in the early part of the eleventh century they were very numerous in Lombardy and Insurbria, and especially in Milan. In Italy they were called *Paterini* and *Cathari*. They afterward appeared in different

countries of Europe. In France they were known as *Albigenses* and *Boni Homines* (good men).

It seems evident that all these different bodies of dissenters, who during the course of many centuries in different parts of the world, and in the face of the fiercest persecutions maintained their advocacy of primitive Christianity, were substantially one and the same people. Holding a common faith, the various branches readily merged into one another, so that the different names used by historians are not generally the names of distinct sects, but different appellations given in different ages and countries to people holding substantially the same principles.

We now come to the Waldenses, who as a continuation or blending of the above-mentioned bodies, occupied a very prominent position from the eleventh century onward for many ages, as the principal advocates of "the faith once delivered to the saints," and the firm protesters against the apostasy and corruptions of the Romish Church.

Their principal dwelling-places were in the secluded valleys of the Cottian Alps, in Piedmont on the Italian side, and the Province of Dauphiné on the French side. These, I say, were their principal retreats; but there were Waldenses, Albigenses, or Vaudois, living in many parts of Europe.

President Edwards, speaking of their Alpine retreat, says: "It is supposed they first betook themselves to this desert, secret place among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of the heathen persecutors which were before Constantine the Great. And there their posterity continued from age to age afterward. And being, as it were, by natural walls, as well as by God's grace, separated from the rest of the world, never partook of the overflowing corruption." —*Works*, Vol. I., *Hist. of Redemp.*, p. 460.

But what were the religious principles of the Waldenses? It is quite a common thing for different bodies of Christians at the present day to claim direct relationship to these ancient witnesses

for the truth. And no wonder there is a desire to trace such a connection, for they were the faithful and heroic preservers of gospel truth and simplicity through those long dark ages when the dominant church had gone so far astray.

It is true that since the Reformation the modern Waldenses have yielded some points in their ancient faith, and have generally become Pedobaptists; but it is concerning the ancient Waldenses that our present inquiry is made—those who were God's faithful witnesses during the Middle Ages.

In seeking to ascertain their principles it is important to know what was believed and preached by the eminent men who in different places were identified with them. Peter de Bruys was one of the most illustrious of the leaders. After twenty years of most successful labor in the south of France in winning souls to Christ and turning multitudes from the corrupted Christianity of those days, he was burnt at the stake, A. D. 1124 or 1130. One of his principles is thus given by Mosheim: "That persons

ought not to be baptized until they come to the use of reason.”—*Cent. XII.*, Part II., Chap. V. Neander says “that he was an opponent of infant baptism, since he regarded personal faith as a necessary condition for true baptism, and denied the benefit in the case of another’s faith.”—*History Christian Religion and Church*, Vol. IV., p. 595.

He was followed by Henry of Lausanne, who preached the gospel boldly, and with great results. The truth as proclaimed by him was accepted by multitudes. He was at last apprehended and committed to prison in A. D. 1148, where he soon after died. Neander says that “he attacked various customs which could not be directly proved from the sacred Scriptures, as corruptions of primitive Christianity; such, for example, as the worship of saints and infant baptism.”—*History Christian Religion and Church*, Vol. IV., p. 601. Mosheim says: “An accurate account of the doctrines of this man also has not come down to us. We only know that he too disapproved of infant baptism, inveighed severely

against the corrupt morals of the clergy, despised the festal days and the religious ceremonies, and held clandestine assemblies."—*Cent. XII.*, Part II., Chap. V.

In a Waldensian Treatise on Antichrist, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, and the Sacraments, supposed to have been written about the year 1120, it is said of Antichrist that "He teaches to baptize children into the faith, and attributes to this the work of regeneration, thus confounding the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration with the external rite of baptism, and on this foundation bestows orders, and indeed grounds all his Christianity." M. de Potter, in his account of the Waldenses, says: "They had a care that it (baptism) should never be conferred on children of a tender age"; and again, "laying stress on the truth that in infancy there can be no actual conversion to the Christian faith, they therefore baptized anew all those who left the Romish Church, wishing to embrace their doctrine." In the public declaration of their faith to the French king, A. D. 1521, according to Montanus,

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they "assert in the strongest terms the baptizing of believers, and deny that of infants." One of their ancient Confessions of Faith declares: "We consider the sacraments as signs of holy things, or as the visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper and even necessary that believers use these symbols, or visible forms, when it can be done. Notwithstanding, we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs when they have neither place nor opportunity of observing them." Starck, Court Preacher of Darmstadt, in his "History of Baptism," says of the Waldenses, "they not only rejected infant baptism, but rebaptized those who passed from the Catholic Church to them." Drs. Ypeij and Dermont, in their "History of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands," say: "It is certain that the Netherlands Waldenses always rejected infant baptism, and administered the ordinances only to adults. We may find this positively asserted by Hieronymus Verdussen, by the abbot of Clugny, and other Romish writers." The ex-

tracts in the foregoing paragraph I have taken from "Roger Williams and the Baptists," by D. C. Eddy, D. D., and "The Baptists," by T. G. Jones, D. D. They are contained also in many other works.

The third canon of the Council of Toulouse, held A. D. 1119, bears witness to the existence and activity of Christians in the province of Dauphiné, who were then "busily agitating the questions of the real presence, infant baptism, and validity of sacerdotal orders." It was the descendants of these sturdy maintainers of truth, whom that apostolic man Felix Neff found in the High Alps ages afterward, and among whom he spent his useful life.—*Life of Felix Neff.*

Mosheim says: "I believe the Mennonites (Dutch Baptists) are not altogether in the wrong, when they boast of a descent from those Waldensians, Petrobrusians, and others, who are usually styled the witnesses for the truth, before Luther. Prior to the age of Luther there lay concealed, in almost every country of Europe, but especially in Bohemia, Moravia,

Switzerland, and Germany, very many persons, in whose minds was deeply rooted that principle which the Waldensians, the Wickliffites, and the Hussites maintained, some more covertly, and others more openly, namely, that the kingdom which Christ set up on the earth, or the visible church, is an assembly of holy persons, and ought therefore to be entirely free, not only from ungodly persons and sinners, but from all institutions of human device against ungodliness. This principle lay at the foundation, and was the source of all that was new and singular in the religion of the Mennonites; and the greatest part of their singular opinions, as is well attested, were approved some centuries before Luther's time, by those who had such views of the nature of the church of Christ."—*Cent. XVI.*, Sec. III., Part II., Chap. VI.

In the early part of the present century, the king of the Netherlands appointed his chaplain, Rev. J. J. Dermont, and Dr. Ypeij, professor of theology in the University of Groningen, to prepare

a history of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands. The result of their investigations was given to the world in their work published at Breda in 1819. They were Pedobaptists, and of course had no inclination to favor the Baptists any further than truth required. They say: "We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who, long in the history of the church, received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian Society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages."

In exact agreement with this is the statement of that illustrious Christian philosopher, Sir Isaac Newton, whose ecclesiastical investigations were only less extensive and profound than his philosophical. He is said to have frequently expressed the opinion that "the Baptists were the only Christians who had never

symbolized with the Church of Rome.”
—*Appleton's American Cyclopaedia.*

XII

Baptist Martyrology

The martyrology of the Baptists would form an almost endless record of persecution and suffering. Age after age they were oppressed in the most relentless manner. Of them it might truly be said: “They had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy); they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth” (Heb. 11 : 36–38).

According to Mosheim: “Vast numbers of these people (Baptists) in nearly all the countries of Europe would rather perish miserably by drowning, hanging,

burning, or decapitation, than renounce the opinions they had embraced.”—*Cent. XVI.*, Sect. III., Part II., Chap. V. Cardinal Hosius, who presided at the Council of Trent, says of the Baptists: “There have been none for these twelve hundred years past, that have been more grievously punished.”

Time would fail to enumerate even a small proportion of those who have suffered for the principles which we hold dear. Such cases crowd the pages of history for many centuries. In Italy, Germany, Switzerland, France, England,—in almost every country of Europe,—Baptists have been tortured and slain in vast numbers for these very principles. They could not yield what they believed to be the truth of God; life could be given up, but not truth.

It would be impossible to tell how terrible were the storms of persecution which fell upon the unoffending Waldenses and Albigenses; how fierce and fiendish the rage of their destroyers; how many thousands of them suffered atrocities similar to those which were perpetra-

ted a few years ago in Bulgaria and other provinces of Turkey. The history of their persecutions is one continuous record of fire and sword, the rack and the gibbet, the most inhuman tortures and heart-rending scenes. Tens of thousands were tortured and slain simply for their opinions. Their persecutors acknowledged that they were persons of blameless life, and loyal subjects; but they held certain religious principles which have always been hated by ungodly men and worldly Christians.

The names of very many might be given who suffered martyrdom in England, alike under Bloody Mary and Protestant Elizabeth, solely for holding these views; but the details of their tortures and death are dreadful. In the sixteenth century immense numbers of Baptists suffered by fine, imprisonment, banishment, or burning. For details, see "Cramp's Baptist History," Chap. V. and VI.

One case may be given to illustrate the kind of persecution Baptists had to suffer in England as late as the latter

part of the seventeenth century. Rev. Benjamin Keach was a Baptist minister at Winslow, in Buckinghamshire. He afterward became pastor of the church to which Rev. C. H. Spurgeon ministered, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London.

“In 1664 Mr. Keach published a little book for the use of children, entitled, ‘The Child’s Instructor; or, a New and Easy Primmer.’ For this he was summoned to appear at the assizes at Aylesbury, October 8, 1664. Being brought to the bar, the clerk said, ‘Benjamin Keach, hear your charge: Thou art here indicted, by the name of Benjamin Keach, of Winslow, in the county of Bucks, for that thou being a seditious, schismatic person, evilly and maliciously disposed, and disaffected to His Majesty’s government, and the government of the Church of England, didst maliciously and wickedly, on the 5th of May, in the sixteenth year of the reign of our sovereign lord the King, write, print, and publish, or cause to be written, printed, and published, one seditious and venomous book, entitled, “The Child’s Instructor; or, a

New and Easy Primer"; wherein are contained, by way of question and answer, these damnable positions, contrary to the Book of Common Prayer, and the liturgy of the Church of England; that is to say, in one place you have thus written: *Q.* Who are the right subjects for baptism? *A.* Believers, or godly men and women, who make profession of their faith and repentance.

“In another place you have maliciously and wickedly written these words: *Q.* How shall it go with the saints when Christ cometh? *A.* Very well; it is the day they have longed for. Then shall they hear the sentence, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you;” and so shall they reign with Christ on the earth a thousand years, even on mount Sion, in the New Jerusalem.

“In another place you have wickedly and maliciously written these plain English words: *Q.* Why may not infants be received into the church now, as they were under the law? *A.* Because the fleshly seed is cast out. Though

God under that dispensation did receive infants in a lineal way by generation ; yet he that hath the key of David, that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth, hath shut up this way into the church, and opened the door of regeneration, receiving in none now but true believers. *Q.* What is the case of infants ? *A.* Infants that die are members of the kingdom of glory, though they be not members of the visible church. *Q.* Do they, then, that bring in infants in a lineal way by generation, err from the way of truth ? *A.* Yea, they do ; for they make not God's holy word their rule, but do presume to open a door that Christ hath shut, and none ought to open.'

“The judge bade the jury bring him in guilty, and then pronounced the following sentence : ‘ Benjamin Keach, you are here convicted for writing, printing, and publishing a seditious and schismatical book, for which the court's judgment is this, and the court doth award that you shall go to gaol for a fortnight without bail or mainprize ; and the next

Saturday to stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury, in the open market, from eleven o'clock till one, with a paper upon your head with this inscription: *For writing, printing, and publishing a schismatical book, entitled, "The Child's Instructor; or, a New and Easy Primer."* And the next Thursday to stand, in the same manner and for the same time, in the market at Winslow; and then your book shall be openly burnt before your face by the common hangman, in disgrace of you and your doctrine. And you shall forfeit to the King's Majesty the sum of twenty pounds, shall remain in gaol until you find sureties for your good behaviour, and for your appearance at the next assizes; then to renounce your doctrines, and make such public submission as shall be enjoined by you."

This inhuman sentence was rigorously carried out. "His head and hands were no sooner placed in the pillory than he began to address himself to the spectators to this effect: 'Good people, I am not ashamed to stand here this day, with this

paper on my head ; my Lord Jesus was not ashamed to suffer on the cross for me ; and it is for his cause that I am made a gazing stock. Take notice, it is not for any wickedness that I stand here, but for writing and publishing those truths which the Spirit of the Lord hath revealed in the Holy Scriptures.' ”—*The Metropolitan Tabernacle, its History and Work, by C. H. Spurgeon.*

Let us now take a glance at America two hundred years ago, and see how Baptists were treated therein. We might reasonably suppose that those who had fled from tyranny in the old world, in order that they might find beyond the Atlantic “freedom to worship God,” would appreciate and practise toleration in their new home. But what are the facts? The Puritans bitterly persecuted those whose religious views differed from theirs, and the Baptists especially felt the force of their intolerance. By statute law it was ordered, in 1636, in the colony of Massachusetts, that “no person being a member of any church, which shall here-

after be gathered without the approbation of the magistrates, and the greater part of said churches, shall be admitted to the freedom of this commonwealth," thus disfranchising all who were not of the standing order. In the same year it was enacted that "if any Christian shall openly condemn the baptizing of infants, or shall purposely depart the congregation at the administration of that ordinance, and continuing obstinate therein, he shall be sentenced to be banished."

In 1651, Obadiah Holmes and John Clark, two Baptist ministers, came from Newport to Lynn, Mass., and attempted to hold a religious service at the house of William Witter, a Baptist. While Mr. Clark was preaching they were arrested by order of the magistrates. At the trial they were charged chiefly with baptizing, and denying the validity of infant baptism, and Mr. Clark was fined twenty pounds, and Mr. Holmes thirty pounds, and in default of payment they were both to be severely whipped. The latter would not, or could not, pay the fine, and

Without mercy his back was laid bare, and the lash laid on for conscience' sake. The flesh hung in gory welts, and yet the blows fell; the blood ran down his legs and made puddles on the ground, and yet the blows fell, until intolerance was satisfied. "As the strokes fell upon me," he says, "I had such a spiritual manifestation of God's presence as I never had before, and the outward pain was so removed from me that I well could bear it; yea, I felt it not, although it was grievous, as the spectators said, the man striking with all his strength (yea, spitting in his hands three times, as many affirmed), with a three-corded whip, giving me therewith thirty strokes."

This was not in Madrid or Rome, but in New England—the land of the free. It was not done by the Inquisitors of the Middle Ages, but by the poor, meek, persecuted Puritans, who, a few years before, longed so earnestly for religious liberty.

As we look back over the noble army of Baptist martyrs all along the centuries, suffering for the truth as it is in Jesus, and sealing their testimony with their blood, we feel that here is a succession worth talking about and worth defending; a succession of apostolic principles and apostolic men. We are thankful for such a spiritual pedigree.

Had not these principles been immortal as the word of God, they would have faded forever from the earth, when all the world waged war against them. Well may we with wonder ask why such principles have always been spoken against and their advocates persecuted. There is nothing in these doctrines that is injurious to men morally or spiritually; nothing that is hostile to the welfare of society; nothing that is subversive of law and good government. And yet they have, from the beginning, been fiercely opposed, and their adherents have been the objects of tyranny. Perhaps we may find the explanation in the fact that the truth, even when uttered by the Son of God, was hated and resisted, and that he—the very truth itself—was crowned with thorns and crucified.

XIII

Our Position

Wisdom says, "Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth." Let us hear then what others have said.

The late Dr. Wood, of Andover, Mass., in 1854 thus expressed himself: "I entertain the most cordial esteem, love, and confidence toward the Baptists, as a denomination. I have had the freest intercourse and the sincerest friendship with Baptist ministers, theological students, and private Christians. And I have wished that our denomination—the Congregational—was as free from erratic speculations, and as well grounded in the doctrines and experimental principles of the Puritans as the Baptists. It seems to me that they are the Christians who are likely to maintain pure Christianity and hold fast the form of sound words."

The great Scotch Presbyterian, Dr. Chalmers, pays the following tribute to the English Baptists: "Let it never be forgotten of the Particular Baptists of England that they form the denomination of Fuller and Carey and Ryland and Hall and Foster; that they have originated among the greatest of all missionary enterprises; that they have enriched the Christian literature of our country

with authorship of the most exalted piety, as well as of the first talent, and the first eloquence ; that they have waged a very noble and successful war with the hydra of Antinomianism ; that perhaps there is not a more intellectual community of ministers in our islands, or who have put forth, to their number, a greater amount of mental power and mental activity in the defense and illustration of our common faith ; and what is better than all the triumphs of genius or understanding, who by their zeal and fidelity and pastoral labor among congregations which they have reared, have done more to swell the list of genuine discipleship in the walks of private society, and thus both to uphold and extend the living Christianity of our nation."

Baptists have no cause to be ashamed of the roll call of their illustrious men. Passing by the notable names of the early and middle ages, and coming down to modern times, we might point to John Bunyan, "the immortal dreamer," whose great allegory has been translated into more languages of the world than

any other book except the Bible; to John Milton, whose colossal genius produced "Paradise Lost"; to Robert Hall, that most finished pulpit orator, the Chrysostom of modern times; to John Foster, whom Sir James Mackintosh pronounced "one of the most profound and eloquent writers that England has produced"; to Andrew Fuller, the eminent theologian, who "traverses with giant steps the whole empire of revelation and of reason, as its handmaid"; to John Howard, the devoted philanthropist and unselfish reformer; to William Carey, one of the most prominent leaders of the modern missionary enterprise, who during the forty years of his labors in India in connection with his associates, published over two hundred and twelve thousand volumes of the Bible, in forty different languages; to Adoniram Judson, the heroic apostle of Burma, one of the first missionaries that ever left the shores of America for a heathen land; to Sir Henry Havelock, the valiant Christian warrior, whose name and fame can never be forgotten while the dread-

ful memories of Lucknow remain; to C. H. Spurgeon, confessedly the most eminent of preachers, who from his pulpit addressed the largest assembly that in his day convened for religious purposes.

One of the first of those missionary organizations, established at the close of the last century and the beginning of the present, which had for their prime object the evangelization of the heathen world, was the Baptist Missionary Society, established in 1792. Of the efforts of this Society "Chambers' Cyclopedia" thus speaks: "No mission band has arisen in any denomination within the century who have surpassed the agents of the Baptist Missionary Society in ardent zeal, patient perseverance, and invincible fortitude, in carrying out their Lord's Commission to preach the gospel to every creature. The names of Carey, Marshman, Ward, and Knibb will be had in grateful remembrance by all succeeding generations, and their footsteps are now being trod by a long list of Christian missionaries of all evangelical

persuasions, who are 'the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ.'"

That great parent of Bible societies (the British and Foreign), having for its object to give the Holy Scriptures to all the world, originated mainly through the efforts of a Baptist minister, Rev. Joseph Hughes, of Battersea, near London. The translation and dissemination of the word of God has always formed an important part of the work done by Baptists, and they have brought to it a devotion not surpassed by any. The London "Quarterly Review," referring in 1809 to the labors of Carey and his friends in India, said: "In fourteen years they have done more toward spreading the knowledge of the Scriptures among the heathen than all the world besides."

Among the earliest, if not the very earliest, evangelical Christian churches in Bengal, Burma, Siam, China, West Africa, and the West Indies, were Baptist churches. And the standard of the cross raised by the faithful and fearless pioneers now waves over multitudes reclaimed from heathenism.

XIV**Statistics, etc.**

The increase of the Baptists is remarkable. For example: In the United States, in the year 1770, there were 77 Baptist churches; there were in 1880, 26,060, with 2,296,327 members, that is communicants. During the last fifty years we have gained nearly 20,000 churches, equivalent to more than one church every day during all those years. There were baptized into the fellowship of our churches in the United States during the year 1880, on a credible profession of their faith, one hundred and two thousand seven hundred and twenty-four persons. There were at that date over fifty churches of our denomination in the city of Philadelphia alone.

In the Dominion of Canada we have (1880) 710 churches and 63,822 members; in Great Britain, 2,591 churches and 268,478 members; in the West Indies, 158 churches and 26,439 members. There are Baptist churches in nearly every

country in Europe, including Russia, Austria, and Turkey. In Germany there are 121 Baptist churches, with 25,497 members; in Sweden, 298 churches and 18,851 members.

In India and Ceylon we had, in 1880, 147 churches and 25,488 members; in Burma, 433 churches and 21,594 members. Including those in all lands, we obtain the following numbers:

| | Churches. | Members. |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Europe | 3,135 | 322,537 |
| Asia | 609 | 49,014 |
| Africa | 56 | 3,173 |
| America | 26,936 | 2,386,747 |
| Australasia | 162 | 7,002 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 30,898 | 2,768,473 |

[NOTE.—The foregoing statistics were gathered in 1880. Since then there has been great increase in many places, *e. g.*, there are now (1898):

| | Baptist Churches. | Members. |
|---|-------------------|-----------|
| In the United States | 43,397 | 4,055,806 |
| Continent of Europe | 1,052 | 105,652 |
| India, including Assam and Burma | 985 | 105,696 |

In the United States, in the year 1897, there were baptized into our churches

198,432 persons, and 126 new churches were constituted].

When we speak of "members," it does not include "adherents," or "probationers," or any such classes, but actual church-members, communicants, those who profess to be real Christians.

And these principles are spreading very rapidly, and indirectly affecting those who will not yet acknowledge that they are scriptural. References to the statistics of other denominations show that, in the United States especially, infant baptism is gradually declining, the number of adult baptisms far exceeding that of infants. It is stated that therein "not one child in ten receives the rite." Multitudes are becoming convinced of the unscripturalness of such an ordinance; and conscientious Christians when they see clearly that there is no warrant for it in God's word, will abandon it. Large numbers of Pedobaptist ministers from various denominations every year adopt the principles here advocated, and become connected with the Baptist body.

In view of the prosperity granted to us as a people, and the prospects of still greater triumphs of the truth, we will but say, to God be all the praise. We do not glory in these things. We glory "in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" alone; but we are thankful for what God has accomplished by his truth through our instrumentality.

As regards their relations with other Christian communities, and with their fellow-men in general, Baptists are not open to the charge sometimes brought against them, of illiberality or exclusiveness. They are always ready to cooperate with their fellow-Christians of other persuasions, in religious effort, in benevolent institutions, in the promotion of every enterprise for the mental, moral, and spiritual welfare of the world, in every good cause, where no compromise of principle is involved. They entertain sincere respect and love for the people of God of every name, and are ready to manifest this Christian friendship as fully and unmistakably as any, but they will not sacrifice God's truth.

Baptists are not, according to the historical signification of the term, Protestants. They do in reality protest, as their predecessors have always done, against all that is unscriptural in doctrine or practice, wherever it exists; but Protestantism, so called, is only as old as A. D. 1529, when the celebrated Protest of certain German States and princes was made at the diet of Spires. We profess to be real Protestants, and we stand side by side, and are one in heart, with all evangelical Christians. We say to those who came out from the great apostasy at the Reformation, God speed you and help you to do a good work! You have reason to protest against the errors of that body from which you came out, only you do not carry your protest far enough. We never were enclosed within Rome's pale, but we rejoice in the work you are doing, and would rejoice more fully if it were more thorough. Oh, that the Reformers had accomplished a complete Reformation! Oh, that they had left certain things behind them when they came out! How much more glorious, more

powerful, and more triumphant would the Reformation have been! But it was scarcely to be expected that they could at once shake off all the errors among which they had been reared. It was a great spiritual resurrection, and in coming forth from the tomb some of the grave-clothes clung to them. How desirable that their descendants should complete the work which they began, and now render the Reformation perfect!

The work of our God shall stand forever. It may be opposed and its holy light obscured for a time, but in the end it must be acknowledged. The Bible is the only infallible guide amid the varying currents of human opinion. But if it is to be our guide it must be fully accepted and implicitly obeyed. Neither long-standing custom, nor natural inclination, nor self-interest, nor the example of numbers, nor any other consideration, should be suffered for a moment to stand between us and the hearty reception of, and unhesitating obedience to, the teachings of Jesus. In God's book we are counseled to "buy the truth and sell it

not." Oh, the truth, the truth of God, what a blessed possession! Be it ours to embrace and keep it unadulterated by human opinions or traditions, for when we appear before our Master's throne nothing but truth will stand.

ARTICLES OF FAITH
AND
COVENANT

THE following are the Articles of Faith which embody the doctrines generally held by the Baptist churches of America, and they are substantially those of Baptists in all lands. A few only of the proof-texts under each Article are noted here, since to give them all would occupy much space. Following these Articles is the Covenant, which is very generally adopted by our churches, and into which each new member voluntarily enters.

I. THE SCRIPTURES.

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it

reveals the principles by which God will judge us ; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.—2 Tim. 3 : 16, 17 ; 2 Peter 1 : 21 ; Isa. 8 : 20.

II. THE TRUE GOD.

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Ruler of heaven and earth ; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love ; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost ; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.—Exod. 34 : 6, 7 ; Deut. 6 : 4, 5 ; Mark 12 : 30 ; Rev. 4 : 11 ; Matt. 28 : 19.

III. THE FALL OF MAN.

We believe the Scriptures teach that man was created in holiness, under the

law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.—Gen. 1 : 27 ; Gen. 3 ; Isa. 53 : 6 ; Rom. 5 : 12-19.

IV. THE WAY OF SALVATION.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins, that having risen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven, and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-

sufficient Saviour.—Isa. 53 : 4, 5 ; John 3 : 16 ; Eph. 2 : 5.

V. JUSTIFICATION.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification ; that justification includes the pardon of sin and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness ; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood ; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God ; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.—Rom. 4 : 4, 5 ; 5 : 1, 9, 17, 19.

VI. THE FREENESS OF SALVATION.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel ; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith ; and that nothing prevents the salvation of

the greatest sinner on earth but his own determined depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel, which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.—Isa. 55 : 1 ; John 3 : 19 ; 5 : 40 ; Rev. 22 : 17.

VII. REGENERATION.

We believe the Scriptures teach that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again ; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind ; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel ; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.—Ezek. 36 : 26 ; John 3 : 3 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 17 ; Eph. 5 : 9.

VIII. REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

We believe the Scriptures teach that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God ; whereby being deeply convinced of

our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our prophet, priest, and king, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour.—Mark 1 : 15; Luke 15 : 18–21; Acts 2 : 37, 38; Rom. 10 : 9–11.

IX. GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE.

We believe the Scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may

be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.—Exod. 33 : 19; Rom. 8 : 28–31; 2 Thess. 2 : 13, 14; 2 Tim. 1 : 8, 9.

X. SANCTIFICATION.

We believe the Scriptures teach that sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means—especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.—Prov. 4 : 18; Rom. 8 : 5; 1 Thess. 4 : 3; 5, 23.

XI. PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

We believe the Scriptures teach that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark

which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.—John 8 : 31 ; 10 : 27–29 ; Phil. 1 : 6 ; 1 John 2 : 19.

XII. THE LAW AND GOSPEL.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government ; that it is holy, just, and good ; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin ; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.—Luke 16 : 17 ; Rom. 3 : 31 ; 7 : 12 ; 8 : 2, 4 ; Gal. 3 : 21.

XIII. A GOSPEL CHURCH.

We believe the Scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by

covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his laws, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word ; that its only scriptural offices are bishops or pastors, and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.—Matt. 28 : 19, 20 ; Acts 2 : 41, 42 ; Phil. 1 : 1 ; 1 Tim. 3 ; Titus 1.

XIV. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

We believe the Scriptures teach that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, into the name of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life ; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ, preceded always by solemn

self-examination. — Matt. 28 : 19, 20 ; Acts 2 : 41, 42 ; 8 : 12 ; 8 : 36-39 ; Rom. 6 : 4 ; Matt. 26 : 26-29.

XV. THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and worldly recreation, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.—Exod. 20 : 8 ; Isa. 58 : 13, 14 ; John 20 : 1, 19, 26 ; Acts 20 : 7 ; Heb. 10 : 25 ; Rev. 1 : 10.

XVI. CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

We believe the Scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society, and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience and the Prince of the kings of

the earth.—Matt. 22 : 21 ; Rom. 13 : 1-7 ; Acts 5 : 29 ; Dan. 3 : 16-18.

XVII. RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED.

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked ; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem ; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse ; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.—Mal. 3 : 18 ; Matt. 25 : 46 ; 1 John 5 : 19.

XVIII. THE WORLD TO COME.

We believe the Scriptures teach that the end of the world is approaching ; that at the last day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave for final retribution ; that a solemn separation will then take place ; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joys, and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in

heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.—Matt. 25 : 13; Acts 1 : 11; 1 Thess. 4 : 13-18; John 5 : 28, 29.

COVENANT.

Having been, as we trust, brought by divine grace to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, and to give ourselves wholly to him, we do now solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other to walk together in him, with brotherly love, to his glory, as our common Lord. We do therefore, in his strength, engage—

That we will exercise a Christian care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully warn, exhort, and admonish each other, as occasion may require.

That we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but will uphold the public worship of God, and the ordinances of his house.

That we will not omit closet and family religion at home, nor neglect the great duty of religiously training our children, and those under our care, for the service of Christ, and the enjoyment of heaven.

That, as Christians are the light of the world and salt of the earth, we will seek divine aid to enable us to deny ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and to walk circumspectly in the world, that we may win the souls of men.

That we will cheerfully contribute of our property, according as God has prospered us, for the maintenance of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, for the support of the poor, and to spread the gospel over the earth.

That we will, in all conditions, even till death, strive to live to the glory of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

“And may the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

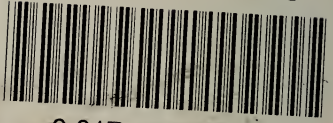
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